SELECTED WRITINGS

J. V. STALIN

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES UNITE!

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VOLUME II

J. V. STALIN

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Report to the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B) on the Work of the Central Committee

March 10, 1939

I

THE SOVIET UNION AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Comrades, five years have elapsed since the Seventeenth Party Congress. No Small period, as you see. During this period the world has undergone considerable changes. States and countries, and their mutual relations, are now in many respects totally altered.

What changes exactly have taken place in this period in the international situation? In what way exactly have the foreign and internal affairs of our country changed?

For the capitalist countries this period was one of very profound perturbations in both the economic and political spheres. In the economic sphere these were years of depression, followed, from the beginning of the latter half of 1937, by a period of new economic crisis, of a new decline of industry in the United States, Great Britain and France—consequently, these were years of new economic complications. In the political sphere they were years of serious political conflicts and perturbations. A new imperialist war is already in its second year, a war waged over a huge territory stretching from Shanghai to Gibraltar, and involving over five hundred million people. The map of Europe, Africa and Asia is being forcibly redrawn. The entire postwar system, the so-called peace regime, has been shaken to its foundations.

For the Soviet Union, on the contrary, these were years of growth and prosperity, of further economic and cultural progress, of further growth of political and military might, of struggle for the preservation of peace throughout the world.

Such is the general picture.

Let us now examine the concrete data illustrating the changes in the international situation.

1. NEW ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES. INTENSIFICATION OF THE STRUGGLE FOR MARKETS AND SOURCES OF RAW MATERIAL, AND FOR A NEW REDIVISION OF THE WORLD

The economic crisis which broke out in the capitalist countries in the latter half of 1929 lasted until the end of 1933. After that the crisis passed into a depression, and was then followed by a certain revival, a certain upward trend of industry. But this upward trend of industry did not develop into a boom, as is usually the case in a period of revival. On the contrary, in the latter half of 1937 a new economic crisis began which seized the United States first of all and then England, France and a number of other countries.

The capitalist countries thus found themselves faced with a new economic crisis before they had even recovered from the ravages of the recent one.

This circumstance naturally led to an increase of unemployment. The number of unemployed in capitalist countries, which had fallen from 30,000,000 in 1933 to 14,000,000 in 1937, has now again risen to 18,000,000 as a result of the new crisis.

A distinguishing feature of the new crisis is that it differs in many respects from the preceding one, and, moreover, differs for the worse and not for the better.

Firstly, the new crisis did not begin after an industrial boom, as was the case in 1929, but after a depression and a certain revival, which, however, did not develop into a boom. This means that the present crisis will be more severe and more difficult to cope with than the previous crisis.

Further, the present crisis has broken out not in time of peace, but at a time when a second imperialist war has already begun; when Japan, already in the second year of her war with China, is disorganizing the immense Chinese market and rendering it almost inaccessible to the goods of other countries; when Italy and Germany have already placed their national economies on a war footing, squandering their reserves of raw material and foreign currency for this purpose; and when all the other big capitalist powers are beginning to reorganize themselves on a war footing. This means that capitalism will have far less resources at its disposal for a normal way out of the present crisis than during the preceding crisis.

Lastly, as distinct from the preceding crisis, the present crisis is not universal, but as yet involves chiefly the economically powerful countries which have not yet placed themselves on a war economy basis. As regards the aggressive countries, such as Japan, Germany and Italy, who have already reorganized their economies on a war footing, they, because of the intense development of their war industry, are not yet experiencing a crisis of overproduction, although they are approaching it. This means that by the time the economically powerful, nonaggressive countries begin to emerge from the phase of crisis the aggressive countries, having exhausted their reserves of gold and raw material in the course of the war fever, are bound to enter a phase of very severe crisis.

This is clearly illustrated, for example, by the figures for the visible gold reserves of the capitalist countries.

VISIBLE GOLD RESERVES OF THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES
(In millions of former gold dollars)

	End of 1936	September 1938
Total	12,980	14,301
U.S.A.	6,649	8,126
Great Britain	2,029	2,396
France	1,769	1,435
Holland	289	595
Belgium	373	318
Switzerland	387	407
Germany	16	17
Italy	123	124
Japan	273	97

This table shows that the combined gold reserves of Germany, Italy and Japan amount to less than the reserves of Switzerland alone.

Here are a few figures illustrating the state of crisis of industry in the capitalist countries during the past five years and the trend of industrial progress in the U.S.S.R.

VOLUME OF INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT COMPARED WITH 1929
(1929=100)

	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
U.S.A.	66.4	75.6	88.1	92.2	72.0
Great Britain	98.8	105.8	115.9	123.7	112.0
France	71.0	67.4	79.3	82.8	70.0
Italy	80.0	93.8	87.5	99.6	96.0
Germany	79.8	94.0	106.3	117.2	125.0
Japan	128.7	141.8	151.1	170.8	165.0
U.S.S.R.	238.3	293.4	382.3	424.0	477.0

This table shows that the Soviet Union is the only country in the world where crises are unknown and where industry is continuously on the upgrade.

This table also shows that a serious economic crisis has already begun and is developing in the Unite States, Great Britain and France.

Further, this table shows that in Italy and Japan, who placed their national economies on a war footing earlier than Germany, the downward course of industry already began in 1938.

Lastly, this table shows that in Germany, who reorganized her economy on a war footing later than Italy and Japan, industry is still experiencing a certain upward trend—although a small one, it is true—corresponding to that which took place in Japan and Italy until recently.

There can be no doubt that unless something unforeseen occurs, German industry must enter the same downward path as Japan and Italy have already taken. For what does placing the economy of a country on a war footing mean? It means giving industry a one-sided, war direction; developing to the utmost the production of goods necessary for war and not for consumption by the population; restricting to the utmost the production and, especially, the sale of articles of general consumption—and, consequently, reducing consumption by the population and confronting the country with an economic crisis.

Such is the concrete picture of the trend of the new economic crisis in the capitalist countries.

Naturally, such an unfavourable turn of economic affairs could not but aggravate relations among the powers. The preceding crisis had already mixed the cards and sharpened the struggle for markets and sources of raw materials. The seizure of Manchuria and North China by Japan, the seizure of Abyssinia by Italy—all this reflected the acuteness of the struggle among the powers. The new economic crisis was bound to lead, and is actually leading, to a further sharpening of the imperialist struggle. It is no longer a question of competition in the markets, of a commercial war, of dumping. These methods of struggle have long been recognized as inadequate. It is now a question of a new redivision of the world, of spheres of influence and colonies, by military action.

Japan tried to justify her aggressive actions by the argument that she had been cheated when the Nine-Power Pact was concluded and had not been allowed to extend her territory at the expense of China, whereas Britain and France possess vast colonies. Italy recalled that she had been cheated during the division of the spoils after the first imperialist war and that she must recompense herself at the expense of the spheres of influence of Britain and France. Germany, who had suffered severely as a result of the first imperialist war and the Peace of Versailles, joined forces with Japan and Italy and demanded an extension of her territory in Europe and the return of the colonies of which the victors in the first imperialist war had deprived her.

Thus the bloc of three aggressive states came to be formed.

A new redivision of the world by means of war became imminent.

2. INCREASING ACUTENESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SITUATION. COLLAPSE OF THE POSTWAR SYSTEM OF PEACE TREATIES. BEGINNING OF A NEW IMPERIALIST WAR

Here is a list of the most important events during the period under review which marked the beginning of a new imperialist war. In 1935 Italy attacked and seized Abyssinia. In the summer of 1936 Germany and Italy organized military intervention in Spain, Germany entrenching herself in the north of Spain and in Spanish Morocco, and Italy in the south of Spain and in the Balearic Islands. In 1937, having seized Manchuria, Japan invaded North and Central China, occupied Peking, Tientsin and Shanghai and began to oust her foreign competitors from the occupied zone. In the beginning of 1938 Germany seized Austria, and in the autumn of 1938 the Sudeten region of Czechoslovakia. At the end of 1938 Japan seized Canton, and at the beginning of 1939 the Island of Hainan.

Thus the war, which has stolen so imperceptibly upon the nations, has drawn over five hundred million people into its orbit and has extended its sphere of action over a vast territory, stretching from Tientsin, Shanghai and Canton, through Abyssinia, to Gibraltar.

After the first imperialist war the victor states, primarily Britain, France and the United States, had set up a new regime in the relations between countries, the postwar peace regime. The main props of this regime were the Nine-Power Pact in the Far East, and the Versailles and a number of other treaties in Europe. The League of Nations was set up to regulate relations between countries within the framework of this regime, on the basis of a united front of states, of collective defence of the security of states. However, three aggressive states, and the new imperialist war launched by them, upset the entire system of this postwar peace regime. Japan tore up the Nine-Power Pact, and Germany and Italy the Versailles Treaty. In order to have their hands free, these three states withdrew from the League of Nations.

The new imperialist war became a fact.

It is not so easy in our day to suddenly break loose and plunge straight into war without regard for treaties of any kind or for public opinion. Bourgeois politicians know this quite well. So do the fascist rulers. That is why the fascist rulers decided, before plunging into war, to mould public opinion to suit their ends, that is, to mislead it, to deceive it.

A military bloc of Germany and Italy against the interests of England and France in Europe? Bless us, do you call that a bloc? "We" have no military bloc. All "we" have is an innocuous "Berlin-Rome axis"; that is, just a geometrical equation for an axis. (*Laughter.*)

A military bloc of Germany, Italy and Japan against the interests of the United States, Great Britain and France in the Far East? Nothing of the kind! "We" have no military bloc. All "we" have is an innocuous "Berlin-Rome-Tokyo triangle"; that is, a slight penchant for geometry. (*General laughter.*)

A war against the interests of Britain, France, the United States? Nonsense! "We" are waging war on the Comintern, not on these states. If you don't believe it, read the "anti-Comintern pact" concluded between Italy, Germany and Japan.

That is how Messieurs the aggressors thought to mould public opinion, although it was not hard to see how preposterous this whole clumsy game of camouflage was; for it is ridiculous to look for Comintern "hotbeds" in the deserts of Mongolia, in the mountains of Abyssinia, or in the wilds of Spanish Morocco. (*Laughter.*)

But war is inexorable. It cannot be hidden under any guise. For no "axes," "triangles" or "anti-Comintern pacts" can hide the fact that in this period Japan has seized a vast stretch of territory in China, that Italy has seized Abyssinia, that Germany has seized Austria and the Sudeten region, that Germany and Italy together have seized Spain—and all this in defiance of the interests of the nonaggressive states. The war remains a war; the military bloc of aggressors remains a military bloc; and the aggressors remain aggressors.

It is a distinguishing feature of the new imperialist war that it has not yet become universal, a world war. The war is being waged by aggressor states, who in every way infringe upon the interests of the nonaggressive states, primarily Britain, France and the U.S.A., while the latter draw back and retreat, making concession after concession to the aggressors.

Thus we are witnessing an open redivision of the world and spheres of influence at the expense of the nonaggressive states, without the least attempt at resistance, and even with a certain connivance, on their part.

Incredible, but true.

To what are we to attribute this one-sided and strange character of the new imperialist war?

How is it that the nonaggressive countries, which possess such vast opportunities, have so easily and without resistance abandoned their positions and their obligations to please the aggressors?

Is it to be attributed to the weakness of the nonaggressive states? Of course not! Combined, the nonaggresssive, democratic states are unquestionably stronger than the fascist states, both economically and militarily.

To what then are we to attribute the systematic concessions made by these states to the aggressors ?

It might be attributed, for example, to the fear that a revolution might break out if the nonaggressive states were to go to war and the war were to assume world-wide proportions. The bourgeois politicians known, of course, that the first imperialist world war led to the victory of the revolution in one of the largest countries. They are afraid that the second imperialist world war may also lead to the victory of the revolution in one or several countries.

But at present this is not the sole or even the chief reason. The chief reason is that the majority of the nonaggressive countries, particularly England and France, have rejected the policy of collective security, the policy of collective resistance to aggressors, and have taken up a position of nonintervention, a position of "neutrality."

Formally speaking, the policy of nonintervention might be defined as follows : "Let each country defend itself against the aggressors as it likes and as best it can. That is not our affair. We shall trade both with the aggressors and with their victims." But actually speaking, the policy of nonintervention means conniving at aggression, giving free rein to war, and, consequently, transforming the war into a world war. The policy of nonintervention reveals an eagerness, a desire, not to hinder the aggressors in their nefarious work : not to hinder Japan, say, from embroiling herself in a war with China, or, better still, with the Soviet Union ; not to hinder Germany, say, from enmeshing herself in European affairs, from embroiling herself in a war with the Soviet Union ; to allow all the belligerents to sink deeply into the mire of war, to encourage them surreptitiously in this to allow them to weaken and exhaust one another ; and then, when they have become weak enough, to appear on the scene with fresh strength, to appear, of course, "in the interests of peace," and to dictate conditions to the enfeebled belligerents.

Cheap and easy !

Take Japan, for instance. It is characteristic that before Japan invaded North China all the influential French and British newspapers shouted about China's weakness and her inability to offer resistance, and declared that Japan with her army could subjugate China in two or three months. Then the European and American politicians began to watch and wait. And then, when Japan seriously started military operations, they let her have Shanghai, the vital centre of foreign capital in China; they let her have Canton, a centre of Britain's monopoly influence in South China; they let her have Hainan, and they allowed her to surround Hongkong. Does not this look very much like encouraging the aggressor? It is as though they were saying: "Embroil yourself deeper in war; then we shall see."

Or take Germany, for instance. They let her have Austria, despite the undertaking to defend her independence; they let her have the Sudeten region; they abandoned Czechoslovakia to her fate, thereby violating all their obligations; and then they began to lie vociferously in the press about "the weakness of the Russian army," "the demoralization of the Russian air force," and "riots" in the Soviet Union, egging on the Germans to march farther east, promising them easy pickings, and prompting them: "Just start war on the Bolsheviks, and everything will be all right." It must be admitted that this too looks very much like egging on and encouraging the aggressor.

The hullabaloo raised by the British, French and American press over the Soviet Ukraine is characteristic. The gentlemen of the press there shouted until they were hoarse that the Germans were marching on Soviet Ukraine, that they now had what is called the Carpathian Ukraine, with a population of some seven hundred thousand, and that not later than this spring the Germans would annex the Soviet Ukraine, which has a population of over thirty million, to this so-called Carpathian Ukraine. It looks as if the object of this suspicious hullabaloo was to incense the Soviet Union against Germany, to poison the atmosphere and to provoke a conflict with Germany without any visible grounds.

It is quite possible, of course, that there are madmen in Germany who dream of annexing the elephant, that is, the Soviet Ukraine, to the gnat, namely, the so-called Carpathian Ukraine. If there really are such lunatics in Germany, rest assured that we shall find enough strait jackets for them in our country. (*Thunderous applause.*) But if we ignore the madmen and turn to normal people, is it not clearly absurd and foolish to seriously talk of annexing the Soviet Ukraine to this so-called Carpathian Ukraine? Imagine: The gnat comes to the elephant and says perkily: "Ah, brother, how sorry I am for you. . . . Here you are without any landlords, without any capitalists, with no national oppression, without any fascist bosses. Is that a way to live?... As I look at you I can't help thinking that there is no hope for you unless you annex yourself to me.... (*General laughter.*) Well, so be it: I allow you to annex your tiny domain to my vast territories...." (*General laughter and applause.*)

Even more characteristic is the fact that certain European and American politicians and pressmen, having lost patience waiting for "the march on the Soviet Ukraine," are themselves beginning to disclose what is really behind the policy of nonintervention. They are saying quite openly, putting it down in black and white, that the Germans have cruelly "disappointed" them, for instead of marching farther east, against the Soviet Union, they have turned, you see, to the west and are demanding colonies. One might think that the districts of Czechoslovakia were yielded to Germany as the price of an undertaking to launch war on the Soviet Union, but that now the Germans are refusing to meet their bills and are sending them to Hades.

Far be it from me to moralize on the policy of nonintervention, to talk of treason, treachery and so on. It would be naive to preach morals to people who recognize no human morality. Politics are politics, as the old, case-hardened bourgeois diplomats say. It must be remarked, however, that the big and dangerous political game started by the supporters of the policy of nonintervention may end in serious fiasco for them.

Such is the true face of the now prevailing policy of nonintervention.

Such is the politcal situation in the capitalist countries.

3. THE SOVIET UNION AND THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

The war has created a new situation with regard to the relations between countries. It has enveloped them in an atmosphere of alarm and uncertainty. By undermining the postwar peace regime and overriding the elementary principles of international law, it has cast doubt on the value of international treaties and obligations. Pacifism and disarmament schemes are dead and buried. Feverish arming has taken their place. Everybody is arming, small states and big states, including primarily those which practise the policy of nonintervention. Nobody believes any longer in the unctuous speeches which claim that the Munich concessions to the aggressors and the Munich agreement opened a new era of "appeasement." They are disbelieved even by the signatories to the Munich agreement, Britain and France, who are increasing their armaments no less than other countries.

Naturally, the U.S.S.R. could not ignore these ominous developments. There is no doubt that any war, however small, started by the aggressors in any remote corner of the world constitutes a danger to the peaceable countries. All the more serious then is the danger arising from the new imperialist war, which has already drawn into its orbit over five hundred million people in Asia, Africa and Europe. In view of this, while our country is unswervingly pursuing a policy of maintaining peace, it is at the same time working very seriously to increase the preparedness of our Red Army and our Red Navy.

At the same time, in order to strengthen its international position, the Soviet Union decided to take certain other steps. At the end of 1934 our country joined the League of Nations, considering that despite its weakness the League might nevertheless serve as a place where aggressors can be exposed, and as a certain instrument of peace, however feeble, that might hinder the outbreak of war. The Soviet Union considers that in alarming times like these even so weak an international organization as the League of Nations should not be ignored. In May 1935 a treaty of mutual assistance against possible attack by aggressors was signed between France and the Soviet Union. A similar treaty was simultaneously concluded with Czechoslovakia. In March 1936 the Soviet Union concluded a treaty of mutual assistance with the Mongolian People's Republic. In August 1937 the Soviet Union concluded a pact of nonaggression with the Chinese Republic.

It was in such difficult international conditions that the Soviet Union pursued its foreign policy of upholding the cause of peace.

The foreign policy of the Soviet Union is clear and explicit.

1. We stand for peace and the strengthening of business relations with all countries. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass on the interests of our country.

2. We stand for peaceful, close and friendly relations with

all the neighbouring countries which have common frontiers with the U.S.S.R. That is our position ; and we shall adhere to this position as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass, directly or indirectly, on the integrity and inviolability of the frontiers of the Soviet state.

3. We stand for the support of nations which are the victims of aggression and are fighting for the independence of their country.

4. We are not afraid of the threats of aggressors, and are ready to deal two blows for every blow delivered by instigators of war who attempt to violate the Soviet borders.

Such is the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

In its foreign policy the Soviet Union relies upon :

1. Its growing economic, political and cultural might ;
2. The moral and poiltical unity of our Soviet society ;
3. The mutual friendship of the nations of our country ;
4. Its Red Army and Red Navy ;
5. Its policy of peace ;
6. The moral support of the working people of all countries, who are vitally concerned in the preservation of peace ;
7. The good sense of the countries which for one reason or another have no interest in the violation of peace.

* * *

The tasks of the Party in the sphere of foreign policy are :

1. To continue the policy of peace and of strengthening business relations with all countries ;
2. To be cautious and not allow our country to be drawn into conflicts by warmongers who are accustomed to have others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them ;
3. To strengthen the might of our Red Army and Red Navy to the utmost ;
4. To strengthen the international bonds of friendship with the working people of all countries, who are interested in peace and friendship among nations.

II

INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE SOVIET UNION

Let us now pass to the internal affairs of our country.

From the standpoint of its internal situation, the Soviet Union, during the period under review, presented a picture of further progress of its entire economic life, a rise in culture, and the strengthening of the political might of the country.

In the sphere of economic development, we must regard as the most important result during the period under review the fact that the reconstruction of industry and agriculture on the basis of a new, modern technique has been completed. There are no more or hardly any more old plants in our country, with their backward technique, and hardly any old peasant farms, with their antediluvian equipment. Our industry and agriculture are now based on new, up-to-date technique. It may be said without exaggeration that from the standpoint of technique of production, from the standpoint of the degree of saturation of industry and agriculture with new machinery, our country is more advanced than any other country, where the old machinery acts as a fetter on producton and hampers the introduction of new techniques.

In the sphere of the social and political development of the country, we must regard as the most important achievement during the period under review the fact that the remnants of the exploiting classes have been completely eliminated, that the workers, peasants and intellectuals have been welded into one common front of the working people, that the moral and political unity of Soviet society has been strengthened, that the friendship among the nations of our country has become closer, and that as a result of all this, the political life of our country has been completely democratized and a new Constitution created. No one will dare deny that our Constitution is the most democratic in the world, and that the results of the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., as well as to the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics, have been the most exemplary.

The result of all this is a completely stable internal situation and a stability of government which any other government in the world might envy.

Let us examine the concrete data illustrating the economic and political situation of our country.

1. FURTHER PROGRESS OF INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE

a) *Industry.* During the period under review our industry presented a picture of uninterrupted progress. This progress was reflected not only in an increase of output generally, but, and primarily, in the flourishing state of socialist industry, on the one hand, and the doom of private industry, on the other.

Here is a table which illustrates this : [See p. 15.—*Ed.*]

This table shows that during the period under review the output of our industry more than doubled, and that, moreover, the whole increase in output was accounted for by socialist industry.

Further, this table shows that the only system of industry in the U.S.S.R. is the socialist system.

Lastly, this table shows that the utter doom of private industry is a fact which even a blind man cannot now deny.

The doom of private industry must not be regarded as a thing of chance. It perished, firstly, because the socialist economic system is superior to the capitalist system ; and, secondly, because the socialist economic system made it possible for us to re-equip in a few years the whole of our socialist industry on new and up-to-date technical lines. This is a possibility which the capitalist economic system does not and cannot offer. It is a fact that, from the standpoint of technique of production, from the standpoint of the degree of saturation of industry with modern machinery, our industry holds first place in the world.

If we take the rate of growth of our industry, expressed in percentages of the prewar level, and compare it with the rate of growth of the industry of the principal capitalist countries, we get the following picture :

This table shows that our industry has grown more than ninefold as compared with prewar, whereas the industry of the principal capitalist countries continues to mark time round about the prewar level, exceeding the latter by only 20 or 30 per cent.

INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS OF THE U.S.S.R. IN 1934-38

	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	Per cent of previous year					1938 compared with 1933 (per cent)
							1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	
	In millions of rubles at 1926-27 prices											
Total output	42,030	50,477	62,137	80,929	90,166	100,375	120.1	123.1	130.2	111.4	111.3	238.9
Of which :												
1. Socialist industry	42,002	50,443	62,114	80,898	90,138	100,349	120.1	123.1	130.2	111.4	111.3	238.8
2. Private industry	28	34	23	31	28	26	121.4	67.6	134.8	90.3	92.9	92.9
	Per cent											
Total output	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00						
Of which :												
1. Socialist industry	99.93	99.93	99.96	99.96	99.97	99.97						
2. Private industry	0.07	0.07	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03						

GROWTH OF INDUSTRY IN THE U.S.S.R. AND THE PRINCIPAL CAPITALIST COUNTRIES IN 1913-38

	1913	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
U.S.S.R. . .	100.0	380.5	457.0	562.6	732.7	816.4	908.8
U.S.A. . .	100.0	108.7	112.9	128.6	149.8	156.9	120.0
Great Britain .	100.0	87.0	97.1	104.0	114.2	121.9	113.3
Germany . .	100.0	75.4	90.4	105.9	118.1	129.3	131.6
France . .	100.0	107.0	99.0	94.0	98.0	101.0	93.2

This means that as regards rate of growth our socialist industry holds first place in the world.

Thus we find that as regards technique of production and rate of growth of our industry, we have already overtaken and outstripped the principal capitalist countries.

In what respect are we lagging ? We are still lagging economically, that is, as regards the volume of our industrial output per head of population. In 1938 we produced about 15,000,000 tons of pig iron ; Great Britain produced 7,000,000 tons. It might seem that we are better off than Great Britain. But if we divide this number of tons by the number of population we shall find that the output of pig iron per head of population in 1938 was 145 kilograms in Great Britain, and only 87 kilograms in the U.S.S.R. Or, further : in 1938 Great Britain produced 10,800,000 tons of steel and about 29,000,000,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity, whereas the U.S.S.R. produced 18,000,000 tons of steel and over 39,000,000,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity. It might seem that we are better off than Great Britain. But if we divide this number of tons and kilowatt-hours by the number of population we shall find that in 1938 in Great Britain the output of steel per head of population was 226 kilograms and of electricity 620 kilowatt-hours, whereas in the U.S.S.R. the output of steel per head of population was only 107 kilograms, and of electricity only 233 kilowatt-hours.

What is the reason for this ? The reason is that our population is several times larger than that of Great Britain, and hence our requirements are greater : the Soviet Union has a population of 170,000,000, whereas Great Britain has a population of not more than 46,000,000. The economic power of a country's industry is not expressed by the volume of industrial output in general, irrespective of the size of population, but by the volume of industrial output taken in direct reference to the amount consumed per head of population. The larger a country's industrial output per head of population, the greater is its economic power ; and, conversely, the smaller the output per head of population, the less is the economic power of the country and of its industry. Consequently, the larger a country's population, the greater is the need for articles of consumption, and hence the larger should be the industrial output of the country.

Take, for example, the output of pig iron. In order to outstrip Great Britain economically in respect to production of pig iron, which in 1938 amounted in that country to 7,000,000 tons, we must increase our annual output of pig iron to 25,000,000 tons. In order economically to outstrip Germany, which in 1938 produced 18,000,000 tons of pig iron in all, we must raise our annual output to 40,000,000 or 45,000,000 tons. And in order to outstrip the U.S.A. economically—not as regards the level of 1938, which was a year of crisis, and in which the U.S.A. produced only 18,800,000 tons of pig iron, but as regards the level of 1929, when the U.S.A. was experiencing an industrial boom and when it produced about 43,000,000 tons of pig iron— we must raise our annual output of pig iron to 50,000,000 or 60,000,000 tons.

The same must be said of the production of steel and rolled steel, of the machine-building industry, and so on, inasmuch as these branches of industry, and all others too, depend in the long run on the production of pig iron.

We have outstripped the principal capitalist countries as regards technique of production and rate of industrial development. That is very good, but it is not enough. We must outstrip them economically as well. We can do it, and we must do it. Only if we outstrip the principal capitalist countries economically can we reckon upon our country being fully saturated with consumers' goods, on having an abundance of products, and on being able to make the transition from the first phase of Communism to its second phase.

What do we require to outstrip the principal capitalist countries economically ? First of all, we require the earnest and indomitable desire to move ahead and the readiness to make sacrifices and invest very considerable amounts of capital for the utmost expansion of our socialist industry. Have we these requisites? We undoubtedly have! Further, we require a high technique of production and a high rate of industrial development. Have we these requisites? We undoubtedly have! Lastly, we require time. Yes, comrades, time. We must build new factories. We must train new cadres for industry. But this requires time, and no little time at that. We cannot outstrip the principal capitalist countries economically in two or three years. It will require rather more than that. Take, for example, pig iron and its production. How much time do we require to outstrip the principal capitalist countries economically in regard to the production of pig iron? When the second five-year plan was being drawn up, certain members of the old personnel of the State Planning Commission proposed that the annual output of pig iron towards the end of the second five-year plan should be fixed in the amount of sixty million tons. That means that they assumed the possibility of an average annual increase in pig iron production of ten million tons. This, of course, was sheer fantasy, if not worse. Incidentally, it was not only in regard to the production of pig iron that these comrades indulged their fantasy. They considered, for example, that during the period of the second five-year plan the annual increase of population in the U.S.S.R. should amount to three or four million persons, or even more. This was also fantasy, if not worse. But if we ignore these fantastic dreamers and come down to reality, we may consider quite feasible an average annual increase in the output of pig iron of two or two and a half million tons, bearing in mind the present state of technique of iron smelting. The industrial history of the principal capitalist countries, as well as of our country, shows that such an annual rate of increase involves a great strain, but is quite feasible.

Hence, we require time, and no little time at that, in order to outstrip the principal capitalist countries economically. And the higher our productivity of labour becomes, and the more our technique of production is perfected, the more rapidly can we accomplish this cardinal economic task, the more can we reduce the period of its accomplishment.

b) *Agriculture*. Like the development of industry, the development of agriculture during the period under review has followed an upward trend. This upward trend is expressed not only in an increase of agricultural output, but, and primarily, in the growth and consolidation of socialist agriculture on the one hand, and the utter doom of individual peasant farming on the other. Whereas the grain area of the collective farms increased from 75,000,000 hectares in 1933 to 92,000,000 in 1938, the grain area of the individual peasant farmers dropped in this period from 15,700,000 hectares to 600,000 hectares, or to 0.6 per cent of the total grain area. I will not mention the area under industrial crops, a branch where individual peasant farming has been reduced to zero. Furthermore, it is well known that the collective farms now unite 18,800,000 peasant households, or 93.5 per cent of all the peasant households, aside from the collective fisheries and collective trapping and handicraft industries.

This means that the collective farms have been firmly established and consolidated, and that the socialist system of farming is now our only form of agriculture.

If we compare the areas under all crops during the period under review with the crop areas in the prerevolutionary period, we observe the following picture of growth :

AREAS UNDER ALL CROPS IN THE U.S.S.R.

	Millions of hectares						1938 compared with 1913 (per cent)
	1913	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	
Total crop area .	105.0	131.5	132.8	133.8	135.3	136.9	130.4
Of which :							
a) Grain .	94.4	104.7	103.4	102.4	104.4	102.4	108.5
b) Industrial .	4.5	10.7	10.6	10.8	11.2	11.0	244.4
c) Vegetable .	3.8	8.8	9.9	9.8	9.0	9.4	247.4
d) Fodder .	2.1	7.1	8.6	10.6	10.6	14.1	671.4

This table shows that we have an increase in area for all cultures, and above all for fodder, industrial crops, and vegetables.

This means that our agriculture is becoming more high-grade and productive, and that a solid foundation is being provided for the increasing application of proper crop rotation.

The way our collective farms and state farms have been increasingly supplied with tractors, harvester-combines and other machines during the period under review is shown by the following tables :

1) TRACTORS EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE IN THE U.S.S.R.

	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1938 compared with 1933 (per cent)
a) Number of tractors (thousand)							
Total	210.9	276.4	360.3	422.7	454.5	483.5	229.3
Of which :							
a) In machine and tractor stations .	123.2	177.3	254.7	328.5	365.8	394.0	319.8
b) In state farms and auxiliary agricultural undertakings . .	83.2	95.5	102.1	88.5	84.5	85.0	102.2
b) Capacity (thous. hp)							
All tractors	3,209.2	4,462.8	6,184.0	7,672.4	8,385.0	9,256.2	288.4
Of which :							
a) In machine and tractor stations .	1,758.1	2,753.9	4,281.6	5,856.0	6,679.2	7,437.0	423.0
b) In state farms and auxiliary agricultural undertakings . .	1,401.7	1,669.5	1,861.4	1,730.7	1,647.5	1,751.8	125.0

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2) TOTAL HARVESTER COMBINES AND OTHER MACHINES EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE IN THE U.S.S.R.
(In thousands; at end of year)

	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1938 compared with 1933 (per cent)
Harvester combines . . .	25.4	32.3	50.3	87.8	128.8	153.5	604.3
Internal combustion and steam engines	48.0	60.9	69.1	72.4	77.9	83.8	174.6
Complex and semicomplex grain threshers	120.3	121.9	120.1	123.7	126.1	130.8	108.7
Motor trucks	26.6	40.3	63.7	96.2	144.5	195.8	736.1
Automobiles (units) . . .	3,991	5,533	7,555	7,630	8,156	9,594	240.4

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If in addition to these figures, we bear in mind that in the period under review the number of machine and tractor stations increased from 2,900 in 1934 to 6,350 in 1938, it may be safely said, on the basis of all these facts, that the reconstruction of our agriculture on the foundation of a new and up-to-date machine technique has in the main already been completed.

Our agriculture, consequently, is not only run on the largest scale, and is the most mechanized in the world, and therefore produces the largest surplus for the market, but is also more fully equipped with modern machinery than the agriculture of any other country.

If we compare the harvests of grain and industrial crops during the period under review with the prerevolutionary period, we get the following picture of growth : [See table, p. 23.—*Ed.*]

From this table it can be seen that despite the drought in the eastern and south-eastern districts in 1936 and 1938, and despite the unprecedentedly large harvest in 1913, the gross production of grain and industrial crops during the period under review steadily increased as compared with 1913.

Of particular interest is the question of the amount of grain marketed by the collective farms and state farms as compared with their gross harvests. Comrade Nemchinov, the statistician, has calculated that of a gross grain harvest of 5,000,000,000 poods in prewar times, only about 1,300,000,000 poods were marketed. Thus the marketed proportion of the grain crop in those days was 26 per cent. Comrade Nemchinov computes that in the years 1926-27, for example, the proportion of marketed produce to gross harvest was about 47 per cent in the case of collective and state farming, which is large-scale farming, and about 12 per cent in the case of individual peasant farming. If we approach the matter more cautiously and assume the amount of marketed produce in the case of collective and state farming in 1938 to be 40 per cent of the gross harvest, we find that in that year our socialist grain farming was able to release, and actually did release, about 2,300,000,000 poods of grain for the market, or 1,000,000,000 poods more than was marketed in prewar times.

Consequently, the high proportion of produce marketed constitutes an important feature of state and collective farming, and is of cardinal importance for the food supply of our country.

GROSS PRODUCTION OF GRAIN AND INDUSTRIAL CROPS IN THE U.S.S.R.

	In millions of centners						1938 compared with 1913 (per cent)
	1913	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	
Grain	801.0	894.0	901.0	827.3	1,202.9	949.9	118.6
Raw cotton . . .	7.4	11.8	17.2	23.9	25.8	26.9	363.5
Flax fibre . . .	3.3	5.3	5.5	5.8	5.7	5.46	165.5
Sugar beet . . .	109.0	113.6	162.1	168.3	218.6	166.8	153.0
Oil seed . . .	21.5	36.9	42.7	42.3	51.1	46.6	216.7

It is this feature of the collective farms and state farms that explains the secret why our country has succeeded so easily and rapidly in solving the grain problem, the problem of producing an adequate supply of market grain for this vast country.

It should be noted that during the last three years annual grain deliveries to the state have not dropped below 1,600,000,000 poods, while sometimes, as for example in 1937, they have reached 1,800,000,000 poods. If we add to this about 200,000,000 poods or so of grain purchased annually by the state, as well as several hundred million poods sold by collective farms and farmers directly in the market, we get in all the total of grain released by the collective farms and state farms already mentioned.

Further, it is interesting to note that during the last three years the base of market grain has shifted from the Ukraine, which was formerly considered the granary of our country, to the north and the east, that is, to the R.S.F.S.R. We know that during the last two or three years grain deliveries in the Ukraine have amounted in all to about 400,000,000 poods annually, whereas in the R.S.F.S.R. the grain deliveries during these years have amounted to 1,100,000,000 or 1,200,000,000 poods annually.

That is how things stand with regard to grain farming.

As regards livestock farming, considerable advances have been made during the past few years in this, the most backward branch of agriculture, as well. True, in the number of horses and in sheep breeding we are still below the prerevolutionary level ; but as regards cattle and hog breeding we have already passed the prerevolutionary level.

Here are the figures : [See table, p. 25.—*Ed.*]

There can be no doubt that the lag in horse breeding and sheep breeding will be remedied in a very short period.

c) *Trade and transport.* The progress in industry and agriculture was accompanied by an increase in the trade of the country. During the period under review the number of state and cooperative retail stores increased by 25 per cent. State and cooperative retail trade increased by 178 per cent. Trade in the collective-farm markets increased by 112 per cent.

Here is the corresponding table : [See p. 26.—*Ed.*]

It is obvious that trade in the country could not have so developed without a certain increase in freight traffic. And indeed during the period under review freight traffic increased in all

TOTAL HEAD OF LIVESTOCK IN THE U.S.S.R.

(In millions)

	July							1938 compared with	
	1916 according to census	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1916 according to census (per cent)	1933 (per cent)
Horses . ..	35,8	16.6	15.7	15.9	16.6	16.7	17.5	48.9	105.4
Cattle . .	60,6	38.4	42.4	49.2	56.7	57.0	63.2	104.3	164.6
Sheep and goats .	121,2	50.2	51.9	61.1	73.7	81.3	102.5	84.6	204.2
Hogs . .	20.9	12.1	17.4	22.5	30.5	22.8	30.6	146.4	252.9

TRADE

	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1938 compared with 1933 (per cent)
1. State and cooperative retail stores and booths—at end of year . .	285,355	286,236	268,713	289,473	327,361	356,930	125.1
2. State and cooperative retail trade, including public catering (in millions of rubles) . . .	49,789.2	61,814.7	81,712.1	106,760.9	125,943.2	138,574.3	278.3
3. Trade in collective-farm markets (in millions of rubles) . . .	11,500.0	14,000.0	14,500.0	15,607.2	17,799.7	24,399.2	212.2
4. Regional wholesale departments of the People's Commissariats of the Food Industry, Light Industry, Heavy Industry, Timber Industry, and Local Industry of the Union Republics— at end of year . . .	718	836	1,141	1,798	1,912	1,994	277.7

FREIGHT TRAFFIC

	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1938 compared with 1933 (per cent)
Railways (in millions of ton-kilometres) .	169,500	205,700	258,100	323,400	354,800	369,100	217.7
River and marine transport (in millions of ton-kilometres)	50,200	56,500	68,300	72,300	70,100	66,000	131.5
Civil air fleet (in thousands of ton-kilometres) . .	3,100	6,400	9,800	21,900	24,900	31,700	1,022.6

branches of transport, especially rail and air. There was an increase in water-borne freight, too, but with considerable fluctuations, and in 1938, it is to be regretted, there was even a drop in water-borne freight as compared with the previous year.

Here is the corresponding table : [See p. 27.—*Ed.*]

There can be no doubt that the comparative lag in water transport in 1938 will be remedied in 1939.

2. FURTHER RISE IN THE MATERIAL AND CULTURAL STANDARD OF THE PEOPLE

The steady progress of industry and agriculture could not but lead, and has actually led, to a new rise in the material and cultural standard of the people.

The abolition of exploitation and the consolidation of the socialist economic system, the absence of unemployment, with its attendant poverty, in town and country, the enormous expansion of industry and the steady growth in the number of workers, the increase in the productivity of labour of the workers and collective farmers, the securement of the land to the collective farms in perpetuity, and the vast number of first-class tractors and agricultural machines supplied to the collective farms—all this has created effective conditions for a further rise in the standard of living of the workers and peasants. In its turn, the improvement in the standard of living of the workers and peasants has naturally led to an improvement in the standard of living of the intelligentsia, who represent a considerable force in our country and serve the interests of the workers and the peasants.

Now it is no longer a question of finding room in industry for unemployed and homeless peasants who have been set adrift from their villages and live in fear of starvation—of giving them jobs out of charity. The time has long gone by when there were such peasants in our country. And this is a good thing, of course, for it testifies to the prosperity of our countryside. If anything, it is now a question of asking the collective farms to comply with our request and to release, say, about one and a half million young collective farmers annually for the needs of our expanding industry. The collective farms, which have already become prosperous, should bear in mind that if we do not get this assistance from them it will be very difficult to continue the expansion of our industry, and that if we do not expand our industry we shall not be able to satisfy the peasants' growing demand for consumers' goods. The collective farms are quite able to meet this request of ours, since the abundance of machinery in the collective farms releases a portion of the rural workers, who, if transferred to industry, could be of immense service to our whole national economy.

As a result, we have the following indications of the improvement in the standard of living of the workers and peasants during the period under review :

1. The national income rose from 48,500,000,000 rubles in 1933 to 105,000,000,000 rubles in 1938 ;
2. The number of factory and office workers rose from a little over 22,000,000 in 1933 to 28,000,000 in 1938 ;
3. The total annual payroll rose from 34,953,000,000 rubles to 96,425,000,000 rubles ;
4. The average annual wages of industrial workers, which amounted to 1,513 rubles in 1933, rose to 3,447 rubles in 1938 ;
5. The total monetary incomes of the collective farms rose from 5,661,900,000 rubles in 1933 to 14,180,100,000 rubles in 1937 ;
6. The average amount of grain received per collective-farm household in the grain-growing regions rose from 61 poods in 1933 to 144 poods in 1937, exclusive of seed, emergency seed stocks, fodder for the collectively-owned cattle, grain deliveries, and payments in kind for work performed by the machine and tractor stations ;
7. State budget appropriations for social and cultural services rose from 5,839,900,000 rubles in 1933 to 35,202,500,000 rubles in 1938.

As regards the cultural standard of the people, its rise was commensurate with the rise in the standard of living.

From the standpoint of the cultural development of the people, the period under review has been marked by a veritable cultural revolution. The introduction of universal compulsory elementary education in the languages of the various nationalities of the U.S.S.R., the increasing number of schools and scholars of all grades, the increasing number of college-trained experts, and the

1) RISE IN THE CULTURAL LEVEL OF THE PEOPLE

	Unit of measurement	1933-34	1938-39	1938-39 compared with 1933-34
Number of pupils and students of all grades . . .	thousands	23,814	33,965.4	142.6%
Of which : In elementary schools	"	17,873.5	21,288.4	119.1%
In intermediate schools (general and special)	"	5,482.2	12,076.0	220.3%
In higher educational institutions	"	458.3	601.0	131.1%
Number of persons engaged in all forms of study in the U.S.S.R.	"	—	47,442.1	—
Number of public libraries . .	"	40.3	70.0	173.7%
Number of books in public libraries	millions	86.0	126.6	147.2%
Number of clubs . . .	thousands	61.1	95.6	156.5%
Number of theatres . . .	units	587	790	134.6%
Number of cinema installations (excluding narrow-film) . .	"	27,467	30,461	110.9%
Of which : With sound equipment	"	498	15,202	31 times
Number of cinema installations (excluding narrow-film) in rural districts	"	17,470	18,991	108.7%
Of which : With sound equipment	"	24	6,670	278 times
Annual newspaper circulation .	millions	4,984.6	7,092.4	142.3%

2) NUMBER OF SCHOOLS BUILT IN THE U.S.S.R. IN 1933-38

	In towns and hamlets	In rural localities	Total
1933	326	3,261	3,587
1934	577	3,488	4,065
1935	533	2,829	3,362
1936	1,505	4,206	5,711
1937	730	1,323	2,053
1938	583	1,246	1,829
Total (1933-38)	4,254	16,353	20,607

3) YOUNG SPECIALISTS GRADUATED FROM HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN 1933-38

(In thousands)

	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
Total for U.S.S.R. (exclusive of military specialists) . .	34.6	49.2	83.7	97.6	104.8	106.7
1. Engineers for industry and building . . .	6.1	14.9	29.6	29.2	27.6	25.2
2. Engineers for transport and communications . . .	1.8	4.0	7.6	6.6	7.0	6.1
3. Agricultural engineers, agronomists, veterinarians and zootechnicians . . .	4.8	6.3	8.8	10.4	11.3	10.6
4. Economists and jurists . .	2.5	2.5	5.0	6.4	5.0	5.7
5. Teachers of intermediate schools, workers' faculties, technical schools, and other educational workers, including art workers	10.5	7.9	12.5	21.6	31.7	35.7
6. Physicians, pharmacists, and physical culture instructors	4.6	2.5	7.5	9.2	12.3	13.6
7. Other specialities . . .	4.3	11.1	12.7	14.2	9.9	9.8

creation and growth of a new intelligentsia, a Soviet intelligentsia —such is the general picture of the cultural advancement of our people.

Here are the figures : [See pp. 30-32.—*Ed.*]

As a result of this immense cultural work a numerous new, Soviet intelligentsia has arisen in our country, an intelligentsia which has emerged from the ranks of the working class, peasantry and Soviet employees, which is of the flesh and blood of our people, which has never known the yoke of exploitation, which hates exploiters, and which is ready to serve the peoples of the U.S.S.R. faithfully and devotedly.

I think that the rise of this new, socialist intelligentsia of the people is one of the most important results of the cultural revolution in our country.

3. FURTHER CONSOLIDATION OF SOVIET SYSTEM

One of the most important results of the period under review is that it has led to the further internal consolidation of the country, to the further consolidation of the Soviet system.

Nor could it be otherwise. The firm establishment of the socialist system in all branches of national economy, the progress of industry and agriculture, the rising cultural standard of the working people, the rising cultural standard of the masses and their increasing political activity—all this, accomplished under the guidance of the Soviet power, could not but lead to the further consolidation of the Soviet system.

The feature that distinguishes Soviet society today from any capitalist society is that it no longer contains antagonistic, hostile classes ; that the exploiting classes have been eliminated, while the workers, peasants and intellectuals, who make up Soviet society, live and work in friendly collaboration. Whereas capitalist society is torn by irreconcilable antagonisms between workers and capitalists and between peasants and landlords—resulting in its internal instability—Soviet society, liberated from the yoke of exploitation, knows no such antagonisms, is free of class conflicts, and presents a picture of friendly collaboration between workers, peasants and intellectuals. It is this community of interest which has formed the basis for the development of such motive force as the moral and political unity of

Soviet society, the mutual friendship of the nations of the U.S.S.R., and Soviet patriotism. It has also been the basis for the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. adopted in November 1936, and for the complete democratization of the elections to the supreme organs of the country.

As to the elections to the supreme organs, they were a magnificent demonstration of that unity of Soviet society and of that amity among the nations of the U.S.S.R. whch constitute the characteristic feature of the internal situation of our country. As we know, in the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. in December 1937, nearly ninety million votes, or 98.6 per cent of the total ballot, were cast for the Communist and non-Party bloc, while in the elections to the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics in June 1938, ninety-two million votes, or 99.4 per cent of the total ballot, were cast for the Communist and non-Party bloc.

There you have the basis of the stability of the Soviet system and the source of the inexhaustible strength of Soviet power.

This means, incidentally, that in case of war, the rear and front of our army, by reason of their homogeneity and inherent unity, will be stronger than those of any other country, a fact which people beyond our borders who are fond of military conflicts would do well to remember.

Certain foreign pressmen have been talking drivel to the effect that the purging of Soviet organizations of spies, assassins and wreckers like Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Yakir, Tukhachevsky, Rosengoltz, Bukharin and other fiends has "shaken" the Soviet system and caused its "demoralization." All this cheap drivel deserves is laughter and scorn. How can the purging of Soviet organzations of noxious and hostile elements shake and demoralize the Soviet system? This Trotsky-Bukharin bunch of spies, assassins and wreckers, who kowtowed to the foreign world, who were possessed by a slavish instinct to grovel before every foreign bigwig and were ready to serve him as spies—this handful of people who did not understand that the humblest Soviet citizen, being free from the fetters of capital, stands head and shoulders above any high-placed foreign bigwig whose neck wears the yoke of capitalist slavery—who needs this miserable band of venal slaves, of what value can they be to the people, and whom can they "demoralize"? In 1937 Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich and other fiends were sentenced to be shot. After that, the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. were held. In these elections, 98.6 per cent of the total vote was cast for the Soviet power. At the beginning of 1938 Rosengoltz, Rykov, Bukharin and other fiends were sentenced to be shot. After that, elections to the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics were held. In these elections 99.4 per cent of the total vote was cast for the Soviet power. Where are the symptoms of "demoralization," we would like to know, and why was this "demoralization" not reflected in the results of the elections?

To listen to these foreign drivellers one would think that if the spies, assassins and wreckers had been left at liberty to wreck, murder and spy without let or hindrance, the Soviet organizations would have been far sounder and stronger. (*Laughter.*) Are not these gentlemen giving themselves away too soon by so insolently defending the cause of spies, assassins and wreckers?

Would it not be truer to say that the weeding out of spies, assassins and wreckers from our Soviet organizations was bound to lead, and did lead, to the further strengthening of these organizations?

What, for instance, do the events at Lake Hassan show, if not that the weeding out of spies and wreckers is the surest means of strengthening our Soviet organizations?

* * *

The tasks of the Party in the sphere of internal policy are:

1. To promote the further progress of our industry, rise of productivity of labour, and perfection of the technique of production, in order, having already outstripped the principal capitalist countries in technique of production and rate of industrial development, to outstrip them economically as well in the next ten or fifteen years.

2. To promote the further progress of our agriculture and stock breeding so as to achieve in the next three or four years an annual grain harvest of 8,000,000,000 poods, with an average yield of 12-13 centners per hectare; an average increase in the harvest of industrial crops of 30-35 per cent; and an increase in the number of sheep and hogs by 100 per cent, of cattle by about 40 per cent, and of horses by about 35 per cent.

3. To continue to improve the material and cultural standards of the workers, peasants and intellectuals.

4. Steadfastly to carry into effect our socialist Constitution ; to complete the democratization of the political life of the country ; to strengthen the moral and political unity of Soviet society and fraternal collaboration among our workers, peasants and intellectuals ; to promote the friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. to the utmost, and to develop and cultivate Soviet patriotism.

5. Never to forget that we are surrounded by a capitalist world ; to remember that the foreign espionage services will smuggle spies, assassins and wreckers into our country ; and, remembering this, to strengthen our socialist intelligence service and systematically help it to defeat and eradicate the enemies of the people.

II
FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF THE C.P.S.U. (B)

From the standpoint of the political line and day-to-day practical work, the period under review was one of complete victory for the general line of our Party. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

The principal achievements demonstrating the correctness of the policy of our Party and the correctness of its leadership are the firm establishment of the socialist system in the entire national economy, the completion of the reconstruction of industry and agriculture on the basis of a new technique, the fulfilment of the Second Five-Year Plan in industry ahead of time, the increase of the annual grain harvest to a level of 7,000,000,000 poods, the abolition of poverty and unemployment, and the raising of the material and cultural standard of the people.

In the face of these imposing achievements, the opponents of the general line of our Party, all the various "Left" and "Right" trends, all the Trotsky-Pyatakov and Bukharin-Rykov renegades were forced to creep into their shells, tuck away their hackneyed "platforms," and go into hiding. Lacking the manhood to submit to the will of the people, they preferred to merge with the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and fascists, to become the tools of foreign espionage services, to hire themselves out as spies, and to obligate themselves to help the enemies of the Soviet Union to dismember our country and to restore capitalist slavery in it.

Such was the inglorious end of the opponents of the line of our Party, who finished up as enemies of the people.

When it had smashed the enemies of the people and purged the Party and Soviet organizations of renegades, the Party became still more united in its political and organizational work and rallied even more solidly around its Central Committee. (*Stormy applause. All the delegates rise and cheer the speaker. Shouts of "Hurrah for Comrade Stalin!" "Long live Comrade Stalin!" "Hurrah for the Central Committee of our Party!"*)

Let us examine the concrete facts illustrating the development of the internal life of the Party and its organizational and propaganda work during the period under review.

1. MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE COMPOSITION OF THE PARTY. DIVISION OF ORGANIZATIONS. CLOSER CONTACT BETWEEN THE LEADING PARTY BODIES AND THE WORK OF THE LOWER BODIES

The strengthening of the Party and of its leading bodies during the period under review proceeded chiefly along two lines: along the line of regulating the composition of the Party, ejecting unreliable elements and selecting the best elements, and along the line of dividing up the organizations, reducing their size, and bringing the leading bodies closer to the concrete, day-to-day work of the lower bodies.

There were 1,874,488 Party members represented at the Seventeenth Party Congress. Comparing this figure with the number of Party members represented at the preceding congress, the Sixteenth Party Congress, we find that in the interval between these two congresses 600,000 new members joined the Party. The Party could not but feel that such a mass influx into its ranks in the conditions prevailing in 1930-33 meant an unhealthy and undesirable expansion of its membership. The Party knew that not only honest and loyal people were joining its ranks, but also chance elements and careerists, who were seeking to utilize the badge of the Party for their own personal ends. The Party could not but know that its strength lay not only in the size of its membership, but, and above all, in the quality of its members. The question accordingly rose of regulating the composition of the Party. It was decided to continue the purge of Party members and candidate members begun in 1933; and the purge actually was continued until May 1935. It was further decided to suspend the admission of new members into the Party; and it actually was suspended until September 1936, the admission of new members being resumed only on November 1, 1936. Further, in connection with the dastardly murder of Comrade Kirov, which showed that there were quite a number of suspicious elements in the Party, it was decided to undertake a verification of the records of Party members and an exchange of old Party cards for new ones, both these measures being completed only in September 1936. Only after this was the admission of new members and candidate members into the Party resumed. As a result of all these measures, the Party succeeded in weeding out chance, passive, careerist and directly hostile elements, and in culling the staunchest and most loyal. It cannot be said that the purge was not accompanied by grave mistakes. There were unfortunately more mistakes than might have been expected. Undoubtedly, we shall have no need to resort to the method of mass purges any more. Nevertheless, the purge of 1933-36 was unavoidable and its results, on the whole, were beneficial. The number of Party members represented at this, the Eighteenth Congress, is about 1,600,000, which is 270,000 less than were represented at the Seventeenth Congress. But there is nothing bad in that. On the contrary, it is all to the good, for the Party strengthens itself by clearing its ranks of dross. Our Party is now somewhat smaller in membership, but on the other hand it is better in quality.

That is a big achievement.

As regards improvement of the day-to-day leadership of the Party by bringing it closer to the work of the lower bodies and by making it more concrete, the Party came to the conclusion that the best way to make it easier for the Party bodies to guide the organizations and to make the leadership itself concrete, alive and practical was to divide up the organizations, to reduce their size. People's Commissariats as well as the administrative organizations of the various territorial divisions, that is, the Union Republics, territories, regions, districts, etc., were divided up. The result of the measures adopted is that instead of 7 Union Republics, we now have 11 ; instead of 14 People's Commissariats of .the U.S.S.R. we have 34 ; instead of 70 territories and regions we have 110 ; instead of 2,559 urban and rural districts we have 3,815. Correspondingly, within the system of leading Party bodies, we now have 11 central committees, headed by the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), 6 territorial committees, 104 regional committees, 30 area committees, 212 city committees, 336 city district committees, 3,479 rural district committees, and 113,060 primary Party organizations.

It cannot be said that the division of organizations is already over. Most likely it will be carried further. But, however that may be, it is already yielding good results both in the improvement of the day-to-day leadership of the work and in bringing the leadership itself closer to the concrete work of the lower bodies. I need not mention that the division of organizations has made it possible to promote hundreds and thousands of new people to leading posts.

That, too, is a big achievement.

2. SELECTION, PROMOTION AND ALLOCATION OF CADRES

Regulating the composition of the Party and bringing the leading bodies closer to the concrete work of the lower bodies was not, and could not be, the only means of further strengthening the Party and its leadership. Another means adopted in the period under review was a radical improvement in the training of cadres, in the work of selecting, promoting and allocating cadres and of testing them in the process of work.

The Party cadres constitute the commanding staff of the Party; and since our Party is in power, they also constitute the commanding staff of the leading organs of state. After a correct political line has been worked out and tested in practice, the Party cadres become the decisive force in the leadership exercised by the Party and the state. A correct political line is, of course, the primary and most important thing. But that in itself is not enough. A correct political line is not needed as a declaration, but as something to be carried into effect. But in order to carry a correct political line into effect, we must have cadres, people who understand the political line of the Party, who accept it as their own line, who are prepared to carry it into effect, who are able to put it into practice and are capable of answering for it, defending it and fighting for it. Failing this, a correct potitical line runs the risk of being purely nominal.

And here arises the problem of properly selecting cadres and fostering them, of promoting new people, of correctly allocating cadres, and testing them by work accomplished.

What is meant by properly selecting cadres?

Properly selecting cadres does not mean just gathering around one a lot of assistants and subs, setting up an office and issuing order after order. (*Laughter.*) Nor does it mean abusing one's powers, switching scores and hundreds of people back and forth from one job to another without rhyme or reason and conducting endless "reorganizations." (*Laughter.*)

Proper selection of cadres means:

Firstly, valuing cadres as the gold reserve of the Party and the state, treasuring them, respecting them.

Secondly, knowing cadres, carefully studying their individual merits and shortcomings, knowing in what post the capacities of a given worker are most likely to develop.

Thirdly, carefully fostering cadres, helping every promising worker to advance, not grudging time on patiently "bothering" with such workers and accelerating their development.

Fourthly, boldly promoting new and young cadres in time, so as not to allow them to stagnate in their old posts and grow stale.

Fifthly, allocating workers to posts in such a way that each feels he is in the right place, that each may contribute to our common cause the maximum his personal capacities enable him to contribute, and that the general trend of the work of allocating cadres may fully answer to the demands of the political line for the carrying out of which this allocation of cadres is designed.

Particularly important in this respect is the bold and timely promotion of new and young cadres. It seems to me that our people are not quite clear on this point yet. Some think that in selecting people we must chiefly rely on the old cadres. Others, on the contrary, think that we must chiefly rely on young cadres. It seems to me that both are mistaken. The old cadres, of course, represent a valuable asset to the Party and the state. They possesss what the young cadres lack, namely, tremendous experience in leadership, a schooling in Marxist-Leninist principles, knowledge of affairs, and a capacity for orientation. But, firstly, there are never enough old cadres, there are far less than required, and they are already partly going out of commission owing to the operation of the laws of nature. Secondly, part of the old cadres are sometimes inclined to keep a too persistent eye on the past, to cling to the past, to stay in the old rut and fail to observe the new in life. This is called losing the sense of the new. It is a very serious and dangerous shortcoming. As to the young cadres, they, of course, have not the experience, the schooling, the knowledge of affairs and the capacity of orientation of the old cadres. But, firstly, the young cadres constitute the vast majority ; secondly, they are young, and as yet are not subject to the danger of going out of commission ; thirdly, they possess in abundance the sense of the new, which is a valuable quality in every Bolshevik worker ; and, fourthly, they develop and acquire knowledge so rapidly, they press upward so eagerly, that the time is not far off when they will overtake the old fellows, take their stand side by side with them, and become worthy of replacing them. Consequently, the thing is not whether to rely on the old cadres or on the new cadres, but to steer for a combination, a union of the old and the young cadres in one common symphony of leadership of the Party and the state. (*Prolonged applause.*)

That is why we must boldly and in good time promote young cadres to leading posts.

One of the important achievements of the Party during the period under review in the matter of strengthening the Party leadership is that, when selecting cadres, it has successfully pursued, from top to bottom, just this course of combining old and young workers.

Data in the possession of the Central Committee of the Party show that during the period under review the Party succeeded in promoting to leading state and Party posts over five hundred thousand young Bolsheviks, members of the Party and people standing close to the Party, over twenty per cent of whom were women.

What is our task now ?

Our task now is to concentrate the work of selecting cadres, from top to bottom, in the hands of one body and to raise it to a proper, scientific, Bolshevik level.

This entails putting an end to the division of the work of studying, promoting and selecting cadres among various departments and sectors and concentrating it in one body.

This body should be the Cadres Administration of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and a corresponding cadres department in each of the republican, territorial and regional Party organizations.

3. PARTY PROPAGANDA. MARXIST-LENINIST TRAINING OF PARTY MEMBERS AND PARTY CADRES

There is still another sphere of Party work, a very important and very responsible one, in which the work of strengthening the Party and its leading bodies has been carried on during the period under review. I am referring to Party propaganda and agitation, oral and printed, the work of training the Party members and Party cadres in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, the work of raising the political and theoretical level of the Party and its workers.

There is hardly need to dwell on the cardinal importance of Party propaganda, of the Marxist-Leninist training of our people. I am referring not only to Party functionaries. I am also referring to the workers in the Young Communist League, trade union, trade, cooperative, economic, state, educational, military and other organizations. The work of regulating the composition of the Party and of bringing the leading bodies closer to the activities of the lower bodies may be organized satisfactorily ; the work of promoting, selecting and allocating cadres may also be organized satisfactorily ; but, with all this, if our Party propaganda for some reason or other goes lame, if the Marxist-Leninist training of our cadres begins to languish, if our work of raising the political and theoretical level of these cadres flags, and the cadres themselves cease on account of this to show interest in the prospect of our further progress, cease to understand the truth of our cause and are transformed into narrow plodders with no outlook, blindly and mechanically carrying out instructions from above—then our entire state and Party work must inevitably languish. It must be accepted as an axiom that the higher the political level and the Marxist-Leninist knowledge of the workers in any branch of state or Party work, the better and more fruitful will be the work itself, and the more effective the results of the work ; and, vice versa, the lower the political level of the workers, and the less they are imbued with the knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, the greater will be the likelihood of disruption and failure in the work, of the workers themselves becoming shallow and deteriorating into paltry plodders, of their degenerating altogether. It may be confidently stated that if we succeeded in training the cadres in all branches of our work ideologically and in schooling them politically to such an extent as to enable them easily to orientate themselves in the internal and international situation ; if we succeeded in making them quite mature Marxists-Leninists capable of solving the problems involved in the guidance of the country without serious error, we would have every reason to consider nine-tenths of our problems already settled. And we certainly can accomplish this, for we have all the means and opportunities for doing so.

The training and moulding of our young cadres usually proceeds in each particular branch of science or technology along the line of specialization. This is necessary and desirable. There is no reason why a man who specializes in medicine should at the same time specialize in physics or botany, or vice versa. But there is one branch of science which Bolsheviks in all branches of science are in duty bound to know, and that is the Marxist-Leninist science of society, of the laws of social development, of the laws of development of the proletarian revolution, of the laws of development of socialist construction, and of the victory of Communism. For a man who calls himself a Leninist cannot be considered a real Leninist if he shuts himself up in his speciality, in mathematics, botany or chemistry, let us say, and sees nothing beyond that speciality. A Leninist cannot be just a specialist in his favourite science ; he must also be a political and social worker, keenly interested in the destinies of his country, acquainted with the laws of social development, capable of applying these laws, and striving to be an active participant in the political guidance of the country. This, of course, will be an additional burden on specialists who are Bolsheviks. But it will be a burden more than compensated for by its results.

The task of Party propaganda, the task of the Marxist-Leninist training of cadres, is to help our cadres in all branches of work to become versed in the Marxist-Leninist science of the laws of social development.

Measures for improving the work of propaganda and of the Marxist-Leninist training of cadres have been discussed many times by the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) jointly with propagandists from various regional Party organizations. The publication, in September 1938, of the *History of the C.P.S.U.*

(B)—Short Course was taken into account in this connection. It was ascertained that the publication of the *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)* had given a new impetus to Marxist-Leninist propaganda in our country. The results of the work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) have been published in its decision, "On the Organization of Party Propaganda in Connection with the Publication of the *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)—Short Course.*"

On the basis of this decision and with due reference to the decisions of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) of March 1937, "On Defects in Party Work," the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) has outlined the following major measures for eliminating the defects in Party propaganda and improving the work of the Marxist-Leninist training of Party members and Party cadres:

1. To concentrate the work of Party propaganda and agitation in one body and to merge the propaganda and agitation departments and the press departments into a single Propaganda and Agitation Administration of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), and to organize corresponding propaganda and agitation departments in each republican, territorial and regional Party organization;

2. Recognizing as incorrect the infatuation for the system of propaganda through study circles, and considering the method of individual study of the principles of Marxism-Leninism by Party members to be more expedient, to centre the attention of the Party on propaganda through the press and on the organization of a system of propaganda by lectures;

3. To organize one-year Courses of Instruction for our lower cadres in each regional centre;

4. To organize two-year Lenin Schools for our middle cadres in various centres of the country;

5. To organize a Higher School of Marxism-Leninism under the auspices of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) with a three-year course for the training of highly-qualified Party theoreticians;

6. To set up one-year Courses of Instruction for propagandists and journalists in various centres of the country;

7. To set up in connection with the Higher School of Marx-

ism-Leninism six-month Courses of Instruction for teachers of Marxism-Leninism in the higher educational establishments.

There can be no doubt that the realization of these measures, which are already being carried out, although not yet sufficiently, will soon yield beneficial results.

4. SOME QUESTIONS OF THEORY

Another of the defects of our propagandist and ideological work is the absence of full clarity among our comrades on certain theoretical questions of vital practical importance, the existence of a certain amount of confusion on these questions. I refer to the question of the state in general, and of our socialist state in particular, and to the question of our Soviet intelligentsia.

It is sometimes asked : "We have abolished the exploiting classes ; there are no longer any hostile classes in the country ; there is nobody to suppress ; hence there is no more need for the state ; it must die away. —Why then do we not help our socialist state to die away ? Why do we not strive to put an end to it ? Is it not time to throw out all this rubbish of a state ?"

Or again : "The exploiting classes have already been abolished in our country ; Socialism has in the main been built ; we are advancing towards Communism. Now, the Marxist doctrine of the state says that there is to be no state under Communism.—Why then do we not help our socialist state to die away ? Is it not time we relegated the state to the museum of antiquities ?"

These questions show that those who ask them have conscientiously memorized certain tenets of the doctrine of Marx and Engels about the state. But they also show that these comrades have not grasped the essential meaning of this doctrine ; that they do not realize in what historical conditions the various tenets of this doctrine were elaborated ; and, what is more, that they do not understand present-day international conditions, have overlooked the capitalist encirclement and the dangers it entails for the socialist country. These questions not only betray an underestimation of the capitalist encirclement, but also an underestimation of the role and significance of the bourgeois states and their organs, which send spies, assassins and wreckers into our country and are waiting for a favourable opportunity to attack it by armed force. They likewise betray an underestimation of the role and significance of our socialist state and of its military, punitive and intelligence organs, which are essential for the defence of the Land of Socialism from foreign attack. It must be confessed that the comrades mentioned are not the only ones guilty of this underestimation. All the Bolsheviks, all of us without exception, to a certain extent sin in this respect. Is it not surprising that we learned about the espionage and conspiratorial activities of the Trotskyite and Bukharinite ringleaders only quite recently, in 1937 and 1938, although, as the evidence shows, these gentry were in the service of foreign espionage organizations and carried on conspiratorial activities from the very first days of the October Revolution? How could we have failed to notice so grave a matter? How are we to explain this blunder? The usual answer to this question is that we could not possibly have assumed that these people could have fallen so low. But that is no explanation, still less is it a justification: for the blunder was a blunder. How is this blunder to be explained? It is to be explained by an underestimation of the strength and significance of the mechanism of the bourgeois states surrounding us and of their espionage organs, which endeavour to take advantage of people's weaknesses, their vanity, their slackness of will, to enmesh them in their espionage nets and use them to surround the organs of the Soviet state. It is to be explained by an underestimation of the role and significance of the mechanism of our socialist state and of its intelligence service, by an underestimation of the importance of this intelligence service, by the twaddle that an intelligence service in a Soviet state is an unimportant trifle, and that the Soviet intelligence service and the Soviet state itself will soon have to be relegated to the museum of antiquities.

What could have given rise to this underestimation?

It arose owing to the fact that certain of the general tenets of the Marxist doctrine of the state were incompletely elaborated and were inadequate. It received currency owing to our unpardonably heedless attitude to matters pertaining to the theory of the state, in spite of the fact that we have had twenty years of practical experience in state affairs which provides rich material for theoretical generalizations, and in spite of the fact that, given the desire, we have every opportunity of successfully filling this gap in theory. We have forgotten Lenin's highly important injunction about the theoretical duties of Russian Marxists, that it is their mission to further develop the Marxist theory. Here is what Lenin said in this connection :

> "We do not regard Marxist theory as something completed and inviolable ; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the cornerstone of the science which Socialists *must* further advance in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life. We think that an *independent* elaboration of the Marxist theory is especially essential for Russian Socialists, for this theory provides only general *guiding* principles, which, *in particular*, are applied in England differently from France, in France differently from Germany, and in Germany differently from Russia." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. II, p. 492.)[1]

Consider, for example, the classical formulation of the theory of the development of the socialist state given by Engels :

> "As soon as there is no longer any class of society to be held in subjection ; as soon as, along with class domination and the struggle for individual existence based on the former anarchy of production, the collisions and excesses arising from these have also been abolished, there is nothing more to be repressed which would make a special repressive force, a state, necessary. The first act in which the state really comes forward as the representative of society as a whole—the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society—is at the same time its last independent act as a state. The interference of the state power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then ceases of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the process of production. The state is not 'abolished,' *it withers away*." (F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Partizdat, 1933, p. 202.)[2]

Is this proposition of Engels' correct ?

Yes, it is correct, but only on one of two conditions : (1) *if* we study the socialist state only from the angle of the internal development of a country, abstracting ourselves in advance from the international factor, isolating, for the convenience of investigation, the country and the state from the international situation ; or (2) *if* we assume that Socialism is already victorious in all countries, or in the majority of countries, that a socialist encirclement exists instead of a capitalist encirclement, that there is no more danger of foreign attack, and that there is no more need to strengthen the army and the state.

Well, but what if Socialism has been victorious only in one, separate country, and if, in view of this, it is quite impossible to abstract oneself from international conditions—what then? Engels' formula does not furnish an answer to this question. As a matter of fact, Engels did not set himself this question, and therefore could not have given an answer to it. Engels proceeds from the assumption that Socialism has already been victorious more or less simultanously in all countries, or in a majority of countries. Consequently, Engels is not here investigating any specific socialist state of any particular country, but the development of the socialist state in general, on the assumption that Socialism has been victorious in a majority of countries—according to the formula : "Assuming that Socialism is victorious in a majority of countries, what changes must the proletarian, socialist state undergo ?" Only this general and abstract character of the problem can explain why in his investigation of the question of the socialist state Engels completely abstracted himself from such a factor as international conditions, the international situation.

But it follows from this that Engels' general formula about the destiny of the socialist state in general cannot be extended to the partial and specific case of the victory of Socialism in one country only, a country which is surrounded by a capitalist world, is subject to the menace of foreign military attack, cannot therefore abstract itself from the international situation, and must have at its disposal a well-trained army, well-organized punitive organs, and a strong intelligence service, consequently, must have its own state, strong enough to defend the conquests of Socialism from foreign attack.

We cannot expect the Marxian classics, separated as they were from our day by a period of forty-five or fifty-five years, to have foreseen each and every zigzag of history in the distant future in every separate country. It would be rdiculous to expect that the Marxian classics should have elaborated for our benefit ready-made solutions for each and every theoretical problem that might arise in any particular country fifty or one hundred years afterwards, so that we, the descendants of the Marxian classics, might calmly doze at the fireside and munch ready-made solutions. (*General laughter.*) But we can and should expect of the Marxists-Leninists of our day that they do not confine themselves to learning by rote a few general tenets of Marxism ; that they delve deeply into the essence of Marxism ; that they learn to take account of the experience gained in the twenty years of existence of the socialist state in our country ; that, lastly, they learn, with the use of this experience and with knowledge of the essence of Marxism, to apply the various general tenets of Marxism concretely, to lend them greater precision and improve them. Lenin wrote his famous book, *The State and Revolution,* in August 1917, that is, a few months before the October Revolution and the establishment of the Soviet state. Lenin considered it the main task of this book to defend Marx's and Engels' doctrine of the state from distortion and vulgarization by the opportunists. Lenin was preparing to write a second volume of *The State and Revolution,* in which he intended to sum up the principal lessons of the experience of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917. There can be no doubt that Lenin intended in the second volume of his book to elaborate and to further develop the theory of the state on the basis of the experience gained during the existence of Soviet power in our country. Death, however, prevented him from carrying this task into execution. But what Lenin did not manage to do should be done by his disciples. (*Loud applause.*)

The state arose because society split up into antagonistic classes ; it arose in order to keep in restraint the exploited majority in the interests of the exploiting minority. The instruments of state authority became concentrated mainly in the army, the punitive organs, the espionage service, the prisons. Two basic functions characterize the activity of the state : at home (the main function), to keep in restraint the exploited majority ; abroad (not the main function), to extend the territory of its class, the ruling class, at the expense of the territory of other states, or to defend the territory of its own state from attack by other states. Such was the case in slave society and under feudalism. Such is the case under capitalism.

In order to overthrow capitalism it was not only necessary to remove the bourgeoisie from power, not only to expropriate the capitalists, but also to smash entirely the bourgeois state machine, its old army, its bureaucratic officialdom and its police force, and to substitute for it a new, proletarian form of state, a new, socialist state. And that, as we know, is exactly what the Bolsheviks did. But it does not follow that the new, proletarian sate may not retain certain functions of the old state, modified to suit the requirements of the proletarian state. Still less does it follow that the forms of our socialist state must remain unchanged, that all the original functions of our state be fully retained in future. As a matter of fact, the foms of our state are changing and will continue to change in line with the development of our country and with the changes in the international situation.

> "The forms of bourgeois states are extremely varied, but their essence is the same : whatever their form, all these states, in the final analysis, are inevitably the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*. The transition from capitalism to Communism certainly cannot but yield a great abundance and variety of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be the same : *the dictatorship of the proletariat*." (Lenin, Vol. XXI, 393)[3]

Since the October Revolution, our socialist state has passed through two main phases in its development.

The first phase was the period from the October Revolution to the elimination of the exploiting classes. The principal task in that period was to suppress the resistance of the overthrown classes, to organize the defence of the country against the attack of the interventionists, to restore industry and agriculture, and to prepare the conditions for the elimination of the capitalist elements. Accordingly, in this period our state performed two main functions. The first function was to suppress the overthrown classes within the country. In this respect our state bore a superficial resemblance to previous states whose functions had also been to suppress recalcitrants, with the fundamental difference, however, that our state suppressed the exploiting minority in the interests of the labouring majority, while previous states had suppressed the exploited majority in the interests of the exploiting minority. The second function was to defend the country from foreign attack. In this respect it likewise bore a superficial resemblance to previous states, which also undertook the armed defence of their countries, with the fundamental difference, however, that our state defended from foreign attack the gains of the labouring majority, while previous states in such cases defended the wealth and privileges of the exploiting minority. Our state had yet a third function : this was the work of economic organization and cultural education performed by our state bodies with the purpose of developing the infant shoots of the new, socialist economic system and re-educating the people in the spirit of Socialism. But this new function did not attain to any considerable development in that period.

The second phase was the period from the elimination of the capitalist elements in town and country to the complete victory of the socialist economic system and the adoption of the new

Constitution. The principal task in this period was to establish the socialist economic system all over the country and to eliminate the last remnants of the capitalist elements, to bring about a cultural revolution, and to form a thoroughly modern army for the defence of the country. And the functions of our socialist state changed accordingly. The function of military suppression within the country ceased, died away; for exploitation had been abolished, there were no more exploiters left, and so there was no one to suppress. In place of this function of suppression the state acquired the function of protecting socialist property from thieves and pilferers of the property of the people. The function of armed defence of the country from foreign attack fully remained; consequently, the Red Army and the Navy also fully remained, as did the punitive organs and the intelligence service, which are indispensable for the detection and punishment of the spies, assassins and wreckers sent into our country by foreign espionage services. The function of economic organization and cultural education by the state organs also remained, and was developed to the full. Now the main task of our state within the country is peaceful economic organization and cultural education. As for our army, punitive organs, and intelligence service, their edge is no longer turned to within the country but to without, against external enemies.

As you see, we now have an entirely new, socialist state, one without precedent in history and differing considerably in form and functions from the socialist state of the first phase.

But development cannot stop there. We are moving ahead, towards Communism. Will our state remain in the period of Communism also?

Yes, it will, unless the capitalist encirclement is liquidated, and unless the danger of foreign military attack has been eliminated, although naturally, the forms of our state will again change in conformity with the change in the situation at home and abroad.

No, it will not remain and will wither away if the capitalist encirclement is liquidated and is replaced by a socialist encirclement.

That is how the question stands with regard to the socialist state.

The second question is that of the Soviet intelligentsia.

On this question, too, as on the question of the state, there is a certain unclearness and confusion among Party members.

In spite of the fact that the position of the Party on the question of the Soviet intelligentsia is perfectly clear, there are still current in our Party views hostile to the Soviet intelligentsia and incompatible with the Party position. As you know, those who hold these false views practise a disdainful and contemptuous attitude to the Soviet intelligentsia and regard it as a force alien and even hostile to the working class and the peasantry. True, during the period of Soviet development the intelligentsia has undergone a radical change both in composition and status. It has become closer to the people and is honestly collaborating with it, in which respect it differs fundamentally from the old, bourgeois intelligentsia. But this apparently means nothing to these comrades. They go on harping on the old tune and wrongly apply to the Soviet intelligentsia views and attitudes which were justified in the old days when the intelligentsia was in the service of the landlords and capitalists.

In the old prerevolutionary days, under capitalism, the intelligentsia consisted primarily of members of the propertied classes—noblemen, manufacturers, merchants, kulaks and so on. Some members of the intelligentsia were sons of small tradesmen, petty officials, and even of peasants and workingmen, but they did not and could not play a decisive part. The intelligentsia as a whole depended for their livelihood on the propertied classes and ministered to them. Hence it is easy to understand the mistrust, often bordering on hatred, with which the revolutionary elements of our country and above all the workers regarded the intellectuals. True, the old intelligentsia produced some courageous and revolutionary individuals or handfuls of individuals who adopted the standpoint of the working class and completely threw in their lot with the working class. But such people were all too few among the intelligentsia, and they could not change the complexion of the intelligentsia as a whole.

But the position with regard to the intelligentsia has radically changed since the October Revolution, since the defeat of the foreign armed intervention, and especially since the victory of industrialization and collectivization, when the abolition of exploitation and the firm establishment of the socialist economic system made it effectively possible to give the country a new Constitution and to put it into effect. The most influential and highly-qualified section of the old intelligentsia broke away from the main body in the very first days of the October Revolution, proclaimed war on the Soviet government, and joined the ranks of the saboteurs. They met with well-deserved punishment for this; they were smashed and dispersed by the organs of Soviet power. Subsequently the majority of those that survived were recruited by the enemies of our country as wreckers and spies, and thus expunged themselves by their own deeds from the ranks of the intellectuals. Another section of the old intelligentsia, less qualified but more numerous, continued for a long time to temporize, waiting for "better days"; but then, apparently giving up hope, decided to go and serve and live in harmony with the Soviet government. The greater part of this group of the old intelligentsia are getting well on in years and are beginning to go out of commission. A third section of the old intelligentsia, mainly comprising its rank and file, and still less qualified than the section just mentioned, joined forces with the people and supported the Soviet government. They needed to perfect their educatnon, and they set about doing so in our universities. But parallel with this painful process of differentiation and break-up of the old intelligentsia there was going on a rapid process of formation, mobilization and mustering of forces of a new intelligentsia. Hundreds of thousands of young people from the ranks of the working class, the peasantry and the working intelligentsia entered the universities and technical colleges, from which they emerged to reinforce the attenuated ranks of the intelligentsia. They infused fresh blood into it and animated it with a new, Soviet spirit. They radically changed the whole aspect of the intelligentsia, moulding it in their own form and image. The remnants of the old intelligentsia were dissolved in the new, Soviet intelligentsia, the intelligentsia of the people. There thus arose a new, Soviet intelligentsia, intimately bound up with the people and, for the most part, ready to serve them faithfully and loyally.

As a result, we now have a numerous, new, popular, socialist intelligentsia, fundamentally different from the old, bourgeois intelligentsia both in composition and in social and political character.

The old theory about the intelligentsia, which taught that it should be distrusted and combated, fully applied to the old, prerevolutoinary intelligentsia, which served the landlords and capitalists. This theory is now out-of-date and does not fit our new, Soviet intelligentsia. A new theory is needed for our new intelligentsia, one teaching the necessity for a cordial attitude towards it, solicitude and respect for it, and cooperation with it in the interests of the working class and the peasantry.

That is clear, I should think.

It is therefore all the more astonishing and strange that after all these fundamental changes in the status of the intelligentsia, there should be people in our Party who attempt to apply the old theory, which was directed against the bourgeois intelligentsia, to our new, Soviet intelligentsia, which is basically a socialist intelligentsia. These people, it appears, assert that workers and peasants who until recently were working in Stakhanov fashion in the factories and collective farms and who were then sent to universities to be educated, thereby ceased to be real people and became second-rate people. So we are to conclude that education is a pernicious and dangerous thing. (*Laughter.*) We want all our workers and peasants to be cultured and educated, and we shall achieve this in time. But in the opinion of these queer comrades, this purpose harbours a grave danger ; for after the workers and peasants become cultured and educated they may face the danger of being classified as second-rate people. (*Loud laughter.*) The possibility is not precluded that these queer comrades may in time sink to the level of extolling backwardness, ignorance, benightedness and obscurantism. It would be quite in the nature of things. Theoretical vagaries have never led, and never can lead, to any good.

Such is the position with regard to our new, socialist intelligentsia.

* * *

Our tasks in respect to the further strengthening of the Party are :

1. To systematically improve the composition of the Party, raising the ideological level of its membership, and admitting into its ranks, by a process of individual selection, only tried and tested comrades who are loyal to the cause of Communism.

2. To establish closer contact between the leading bodies and the work of the lower bodies, so as to make their work of leadership more practical and specific and less confined to meetings and offices.

3. To centralize the work of selecting cadres, to train them carefully and foster them, to study the merits and demerits of

workers thoroughly, to promote young workers boldly and adapt the selection and allocation of cadres to the requirements of the political line of the Party.

4. To centralize Party propaganda and agitation, to extend the propaganda of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, and to raise the theoretical level and improve the political schooling of our cadres.

* * *

Comrades, I am now about to conclude my report.

I have sketched in broad outline the path traversed by our Party during the period under review. The results of the work of the Party and of its Central Committee during this period are well known. There have been mistakes and shortcomings in our work. The Party and the Central Committee did not conceal them and strove to correct them. There have also been important successes and big achievements, which must not however be allowed to turn our heads.

The chief conclusion to be drawn is that the working class of our country, having abolished the exploitation of man by man and firmly established the socialist system, has proved to the world the truth of its cause. That is the chief conclusion, for it strengthens our faith in the power of the working class and in the inevitability of its ultimate victory.

The bourgeoisie of all countries asserts that the people cannot get along without capitalists and landlords, without merchants and kulaks. The working class of our country has proved in practice that the people can get along perfectly well without exploiters.

The bourgeoisie of all countries asserts that the working class, having destroyed the old bourgeois system, will be incapable of building anything new to replace the old. The working class of our country has proved in practice that it is quite capable not only of destroying the old system but of building a new and better system, a socialist system, a system, moreover, to which crises and unemployment are unknown.

The bourgeoisie of all countries asserts that the peasantry is incapable of taking the path of Socialism. The collective-farm peasants of our country have proved in practice that they can do so quite successfully.

The chief endeavour of the bourgeoisie of all countries and of its reformist hangers-on is to kill in the working class faith in its own strength, faith in the possibility and inevitability of its victory, and thus to perpetuate capitalist slavery. For the bourgeoisie knows that if capitalism has not yet been overthrown and still continues to exist, it owes this not to its own merits, but to the fact that the proleariat still has not enough faith in the possibility of its victory. It cannot be said that the efforts of the bourgeoisie in this respect have been altogether unsuccessful. It must be confessed that the bourgeoisie and its agents among the working class have to some extent succeeded in poisoning the minds of the working class with the virus of doubt and disbelief. If the successes of the working class of our country, if its fight and victory serve to rouse the spirit of the working class in the capitalist countries and to strengthen its faith in its own power and in its victory, then our Party may say that its work has not been in vain. And there need be no doubt that this will be the case. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

Long live our victorious working class! (*Applause.*)

Long live our victorious collective-farm peasantry! (*Applause.*)

Long live our socialist intelligentsia! (*Applause.*)

Long live the great friendship of the nations of our country! (*Applause.*)

Long live the Communist Party of the Soviet Union! (*Applause.*)

(*The delegates rise and hail Comrade Stalin with loud and stormy cheers. Cries of: "Long live Comrade Stalin!" "Hurrah for our great Stalin!" "Hurrah for our beloved Stalin!"*)

Conclusion

What are the chief conclusions to be drawn from the historical path traversed by the Bolshevik Party ?

What does the history of the C.P.S.U.(B.) teach us.

1) The history of the Party teaches us, first of all, that the victory of the proletarian revolution, the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is impossible without a revolutionary party of the proletariat, a party free from opportunism, irreconcilable towards compromisers and capitulators, and revolutionary in its attitude towards the bourgeoisie and its state power.

The history of the Party teaches us that to leave the proletariat without such a party means to leave it without revolutionary leadership ; and to leave it without revolutionary leadership means to ruin the cause of the proletarian revolution.

The history of the Party teaches us that the ordinary Social-Democratic Party of the West-European type, brought up under conditions of civil peace, trailing in the wake of the opportunists, dreaming of "social reforms" and dreading social revolution, cannot be such a party.

The history of the Party teaches us that only a party of the new type, a Marxist-Leninist party, a party of social revolution, a party capable of preparing the proletariat for decisive battles against the bourgeoisie and of organizing the victory of the proletarian revolution, can be such a party.

The Bolshevik Party in the U.S.S.R. is such a party.

> "In the pre-revolutionary period," Comrade Stalin says, "in the period of more or less peaceful development, when the parties of the Second International were the predominant force in the working-class movement and parliamentary forms of struggle were regarded as the principal forms, the Party neither had nor could have had that great and decisive importance which it acquired afterwards, under conditions of open revolutionary battle. Defending the Second International against attacks made upon it, Kautsky says that the parties of the Second International are instruments of peace and not of war, and that for this very reason they

were powerless to take any important steps during the war, during the period of revolutionary action by the proletariat. That is quite true. But what does it mean? It means that the parties of the Second International are unfit for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, that they are not militant parties of the proletariat, leading the workers to power, but election machines adapted for parliamentary elections and parliamentary struggle. This, in fact, explains why, in the days when the opportunists of the Second International were in the ascendancy, it was not the Party but its parliamentary group that was the chief political organization of the proletariat. It is well known that the Party at that time was really an appendage and subsidiary of the parliamentary group. It goes without saying that under such circumstances and with such a Party at the helm there could be no question of preparing the proletariat for revolution.

"But matters have changed radically with the dawn of the new period. The new period is one of open class collisions, of revolutionary action by the proletariat, of proletarian revolution, a period when forces are being directly mustered for the overthrow of imperialism and the seizure of power by the proletariat. In this period the proletariat is confronted with new tasks, the tasks of reorganizing all Party work on new, revolutionary lines; of educating the workers in the spirit of revolutionary struggle for power; of preparing and moving up the reserves; of establishing an alliance with the proletarians of neighbouring countries; of establishing firm ties with the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries, etc., etc. To think that these new tasks can be performed by the old Social-Democratic parties, brought up as they were in the peaceful conditions of parliamentarism, is to doom oneself to hopeless despair and inevitable defeat. If, with such tasks to shoulder, the proletariat remained under the leadership of the old parties, it would be completely unarmed. It goes without saying that the proletariat could not consent to such a state of affairs.

"Hence the necessity for a new party, a militant party, a revolutionary party, one bold enough to lead the proletarians in the struggle for power, sufficiently experienced to find its bearings amidst the complex conditions of a revolutionary situation, and sufficiently flexible to steer clear of all submerged rocks in the path to its goal.

"Without such a party it is useless even to think of overthrowing imperialism and achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"This new party is the party of Leninism." (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism,* Eng. ed., Moscow 1947, pp. 80-1.)

2) The history of the Party further teaches us that a party of the working class cannot perform the role of leader of its class, cannot perform the role of organizer and leader of the proletarian revolution, unless it has mastered the advanced theory of the working-class movement, the Marxist-Leninist theory.

The power of the Marxist-Leninist theory lies in the fact that it enables the Party to find the right orientation in any situation, to understand the inner connection of current events, to foresee their course and to perceive not only how and in what direction they are developing in the present, but how and in what direction they are bound to develop in the future.

Only a party which has mastered the Marxist-Leninist theory can confidently advance and lead the working class forward.

On the other hand, a party which has not mastered the Marxist-Leninist theory is compelled to grope its way, loses confidence in its actions and is unable to lead the working class forward.

It may seem that all that is required for mastering the Marxist-Leninist theory is to diligently learn by heart isolated conclusions and propositions from the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin, learn to quote them at opportune times and rest at that, in the hope that the conclusions and propositions thus memorized will suit each and every situation and occasion. But such an approach to the Marxist-Leninist theory is altogether wrong. The Marxist-Leninist theory must not be regarded as a collection of dogmas, as a catechism, as a symbol of faith, and the Marxists themselves as pedants and dogmatists. The Marxist-Leninist theory is the science of the development of society, the science of the working-class movement, the science of the proletarian revolution, the science of the building of the Communist society. And as a science it does not and cannot stand still, but develops and perfects itself. Clearly, in its development it is bound to become enriched by new experience and new knowledge, and some of its propositions and conclusions are bound to change in the course of time, are bound to be replaced by new conclusions and propositions corresponding to the new historical conditions.

Mastering the Marxist-Leninist theory does not at all mean learning all its formulas and conclusions by heart and clinging to their every letter. To master the Marxist-Leninist theory we must first of all learn to distinguish between its letter and substance.

Mastering the Marxist-Leninist theory means assimilating *the substance* of this theory and learning to use it in the solution of the practical problems of the revolutionary movement under the varying conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat.

Mastering the Marxist-Leninist theory means being able to enrich this theory with the new experience of the revolutionary movement, with new propositions and conclusions, it means being able to *develop it and advance it* without hesitating to replace—in accordance with the substance of the theory—such of its propositions and conclusions as have become antiquated by new ones corresponding to the new historical situation.

The Marxist-Leninist theory is not a dogma but a guide to action.

Before the second Russian revolution (February 1917), the Marxists of all countries assumed that the parliamentary democratic republic was the most suitable form of political organization of society in the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism. It is true that in the seventies Marx stated that the most suitable form for the dictatorship of the proletariat was a political organization of the type of the Paris Commune, and not the parliamentary republic. But, unfortunately, Marx did not develop this proposition any further in his writings and it was committed to oblivion. Moreover, Engels' authoritative statement in his criticism of the draft of the Erfurt Program in 1891, namely, that "the democratic republic. . . .is. . . .the specific form for the dictatorship of the proletariat" left no doubt that the Marxists continued to regard the democratic republic as the political form for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Engels' proposition later became a guiding principle for all Marxists, including Lenin. However, the Russian Revolution of

1905, and especially the Revolution of February 1917, advanced a new form of political organization of society—the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies. As a result of a study of the experience of the two Russian revolutions, Lenin, on the basis of the theory of Marxism, arrived at the conclusion that the best political form for the dictatorship of the proletariat was not a parliamentary democratic republic, but a republic of Soviets. Proceeding from this, Lenin, in April 1917, during the period of transition from the bourgeois to the Socialist revolution, issued the slogan of a republic of Soviets as the best political form for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The opportunists of all countries clung to the parliamentary republic and accused Lenin of departing from Marxism and destroying democracy. But it was Lenin, of course, who was the real Marxist who had mastered the theory of Marxism, and not the opportunists, for Lenin was advancing the Marxist theory by enriching it with new experience, whereas the opportunists were dragging it back and transforming one of its propositions into a dogma.

What would have happened to the Party, to our revolution, to Marxism, if Lenin had been overawed by the letter of Marxism and had not had the courage to replace one of the old propositions of Marxism, formulated by Engels, by the new proposition regarding the republic of Soviets, a proposition that corresponded to the new historical conditions? The Party would have groped in the dark, the Soviets would have been disorganized, we should not have had a Soviet power, and the Marxist theory would have suffered a severe setback. The proletariat would have lost, and the enemies of the proletariat would have won.

As a result of a study of pre-imperialist capitalism Engels and Marx arrived at the conclusion that the Socialist revolution could not be victorious in one country, taken singly, that it could be victorious only by a simultaneous stroke in all, or the majority of the civilized countries. That was in the middle of the nineteenth century. This conclusion later became a guiding principle for all Marxists. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century, pre-imperialist capitalism had grown into imperialist capitalism, ascendant capitalism had turned into moribund capitalism. As a result of a study of imperialist capitalism, Lenin, on the basis of the Marxist theory, arrived at the conclusion that the old formula of Engels and Marx no longer corresponded to the new historical conditions, and that the victory of the Socialist revolution was quite possible in one country, taken singly. The opportunists of all countries clung to the old formula of Engels and Marx and accused Lenin of departing from Marxism. But it was Lenin, of course, who was the real Marxist who had mastered the theory of Marxism, and not the opportunists, for Lenin was advancing the Marxist theory by enriching it with new experience, whereas the opportunists were dragging it back, mummifying it.

What would have happened to the Party, to our revolution, to Marxism, if Lenin had been overawed by the letter of Marxism and had not had the courage of theoretical conviction to discard one of the old conclusions of Marxism and to replace it by a new conclusion affirming that the victory of Socialism in one country, taken singly, was possible, a conclusion which corresponded to the new historical conditions ? The Party would have groped in the dark, the proletarian revolution would have been deprived of leadership, and the Marxist theory would have begun to decay. The proletariat would have lost, and the enemies of the proletariat would have won.

Opportunism does not always mean a direct denial of the Marxist theory or of any of its propositions and conclusions. Opportunism is sometimes expressed in the attempt to cling to certain of the propositions of Marxism that have already become antiquated and to convert them into a dogma, so as to retard the further development of Marxism, and, consequently, to retard the development of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.

It may be said without fear of exaggeration that since the death of Engels the master theoretician Lenin, and after Lenin, Stalin and the other disciples of Lenin, have been the only Marxists who have advanced the Marxist theory and who have enriched it with new experience in the new conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat.

And just because Lenin and the Leninists have advanced the Marxist theory, Leninism is a further development of Marxism ; it is Marxism in the new conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat, Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, Marxism of the epoch of the victory of Socialism on one-sixth of the earth's surface.

The Bolshevik Party could not have won in October 1917 if its foremost men had not mastered the theory of Marxism, if they had not learned to regard this theory as a guide to action, if they had not learned to advance the Marxist theory by enriching it with the new experience of the class struggle of the proletariat.

Criticizing the German Marxists in America who had undertaken to lead the American working-class movement, Engels wrote :

> "The Germans have not understood how to use their theory as a lever which could set the American masses in motion ; they do not understand the theory themselves for the most part and treat it in a doctrinaire and dogmatic way, as something which has got to be learned off by heart and which will then supply all needs without more ado. To them it is a credo and not a guide to action." (Letter to Sorge, November 29, 1886.)

Criticizing Kamenev and some of the old Bolsheviks who in April 1917 clung to the old formula of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry at a time when the revolutionary movement had gone on ahead and was demanding a transition to the Socialist revolution, Lenin wrote :

> "Our teaching is not a dogma, but a guide to action, Marx and Engles always used to say, rightly ridiculing the learning and repetition by rote of 'formulas' which at best are only capable of outlining *general* tasks that are necessarily liable to be modified by the *concrete* economic and political conditions of each separate *phase* of the historical process. . . . It is essential to realize the incontestable truth that a Marxist must take cognizance of real life, of the concrete *realities,* and must not continue to cling to a theory of yesterday. . . ." (Lenin, *Collected Works,* Russ. ed., Vol. XX, pp. 100-01.)

3) The history of the Party further teaches us that unless the petty-bourgeois parties which are active within the ranks of the working class and which push the backward sections of the working class into the arms of the bourgeoisie, thus splitting the unity of the working class, are smashed, the victory of the proletarian revolution is impossible.

The history of our Party is the history of the struggle against the petty-bourgeois parties—the Socialist Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Anarchists and nationalists—and of the utter defeat of these parties. If these parties had not been vanquished and driven out of the ranks of the working class, the unity of the working class could not have been achieved ; and if the working class had not been united, it would have been impossible to achieve the victory of the proletarian revolution.

If these parties, which at first stood for the preservation of capitalism, and later, after the October Revolution, for the restoration of capitalism, had not been utterly defeated, it would have been impossible to preserve the dictatorship of the proletariat, to defeat the foreign armed intervention, and to build up Socialism.

It cannot be regarded as an accident that all the petty-bourgeois parties, which styled themselves "revolutionary" and "socialist" parties in order to deceive the people—the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Anarchists and nationalists—became counter-revolutionary parties even before the October Socialist Revolution, and later turned into agents of foreign bourgeois espionage services, into a gang of spies, wreckers, diversionists, assassins and traitors to the country.

> "The unity of the proletariat in the epoch of social revolution," Lenin says, "can be achieved only by the extreme revolutionary party of Marxism, and only by a relentless struggle against all other parties." (Lenin, *Collected Works,* Russ. ed., Vol. XXVI, p. 50).

4) The history of the Party further teaches us that unless the Party of the working class wages an uncompromising struggle against the opportunists within its own ranks, unless it smashes the capitulators in its own midst, it cannot preserve unity and discipline within its ranks, it cannot perform its role of organizer and leader of the proletarian revolution, nor its role as the builder of the new, Socialist society.

The history of the development of the internal life of our Party is the history of the struggle against the opportunist groups within the Party—the "Economists," Mensheviks, Trotskyites, Bukharinites and nationalist deviators—and of the utter defeat of these groups.

The history of our Party teaches us that all these groups of capitulators were in point of fact agents of Menshevism within our Party, the lees and dregs of Menshevism, the continuers of Menshevism. Like the Mensheviks, they acted as vehicles of bourgeois influence among the working class and in the Party. The struggle for the liquidation of these groups within the Party was therefore a continuation of the struggle for the liquidation of Menshevism.

If we had not defeated the "Economists" and the Mensheviks, we could not have built the Party and led the working class to the proletarian revolution.

If we had not defeated the Trotskyites and Bukharinites, we could not have brought about the conditions that are essential for the building of Socialism.

If we had not defeated the nationalist deviators of all shades and colours, we could not have educated the people in the spirit of internationalism, we could not have safeguarded the banner of the great amity of the nations of the U.S.S.R., and we could not have built up the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

It may seem to some that the Bolsheviks devoted far too much time to this struggle against the opportunist elements within the Party, that they overrated their importance. But that is altogether wrong. Opportunism in our midst is like an ulcer in a healthy organism, and must not be tolerated. The Party is the leading detachment of the working class, its advanced fortress, its General Staff. Sceptics, opportunists, capitulators and traitors cannot be tolerated on the directing staff of the working class. If, while it is carrying on a life and death fight against the bourgeoisie, there are capitulators and traitors on its own staff, within its own fortress, the working class will be caught between two fires, from the front and the rear. Clearly, such a struggle can only end in defeat. The easiest way to capture a fortress is from within. To attain victory, the Party of the working class, its directing staff, its advanced fortress, must first be purged of capitulators, deserters, scabs and traitors.

It cannot be regarded as an accident that the Trotskyites, Bukharinites and nationalist deviators who fought Lenin and the Party ended just as the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties did, namely, by becoming agents of fascist espionage services, by turning spies, wreckers, assassins, diversionists and traitors to the country.

> "With reformists, Mensheviks, in our ranks," Lenin said, " it is *impossible* to achieve victory in the proletarian revolution, it is *impossible* to retain it. That is obvious in prin-

> ciple, and it has been strikingly confirmed by the experience both of Russia and Hungary. . . . In Russia, difficult situations have arisen *many times*, when the Soviet regime would *most certainly* have been overthrown had Mensheviks, reformists and petty-bourgeois democrats remained in our Party. . . ." (*Lenin, Collected Works, Russ.* ed., Vol. XXV, pp. 462-63.)
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> "Our Party," Comrade Stalin says, "succeeded in creating internal unity and unexampled cohesion of its ranks primarily because it was able in good time to purge itself of the opportunist pollution, because it was able to rid its ranks of the Liquidators, the Mensheviks. Proletarian parties develop and become strong by purging themselves of opportunists and reformists, social-imperialists and social-chauvinists, social-patriots and social-pacifists. The Party becomes strong by purging itself of opportunist elements." (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism, Eng.* ed., Moscow 1947, p. 91.)

5) The history of the Party further teaches us that a party cannot perform its role as leader of the working class if, carried away by success, it begins to grow conceited, ceases to observe the defects in its work, and fears to acknowledge its mistakes and frankly and honestly to correct them in good time.

A party is invincible if it does not fear criticism and self-citicism, if it does not gloss over the mistakes and defects in its work, if it teaches and educates its cadres by drawing the lessons from the mistakes in Party work, and if it knows how to correct its mistakes in time.

A party perishes if it conceals its mistakes, if it glosses over sore problems, if it covers up its shortcomings by pretending that all is well, if it is intolerant of criticism and self-criticism, if it gives way to self-complacency and vainglory and if it rests on its laurels.

> "The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes," Lenin says, "is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it *in practice* fulfils its obligations towards its *class* and the toiling *masses*. Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analyzing the conditions which led to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious party ; that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the *class*, and then

> the *masses.*" (Lenin, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Moscow 1947, Vol. II, p. 599.) And further :
>
> "All revolutionary parties which have hitherto perished, did so because they *grew conceited,* failed to see where their strength lay, *and feared to speak of their weaknesses.* But we shall not perish, for we do not fear to speak of our weaknesses and will learn to overcome them." (Lenin, *Collected Works,* Russ. ed., Vol. XXVII, pp. 260-61.)

6) Lastly, the history of the Party teaches us that unless it has wide connection with the masses, unless it constantly strengthens these connections, unless it knows how to hearken to the voice of the masses and understand their urgent needs, unless it is prepared not only to teach the masses, but to learn from the masses, a party of the working class cannot be a real mass party capable of leading the working-class millions and all the labouring people.

A party is invincible if it is able, as Lenin says, "to link itself with, to keep in close touch with, and to a certain extent if you like, to merge with the broadest masses of the toilers—primarily with the proletariat, but also with the non-proletarian toiling masses." (Lenin, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Moscow 1947, Vol. II, p. 574.)

A party perishes if it shuts itself up in its narrow party shell, if it severs itself from the masses, if it allows itself to be covered with bureaucratic rust.

> "We may take it as the rule," Comrade Stalin says, "that as long as the Bolsheviks maintain connection with the broad masses of the people they will be invincible. And, on the contrary, as soon as the Bolsheviks sever themselves from the masses and lose their connection with them, as soon as they become covered with bureaucratic rust, they will lose all their strength and become a mere cipher.
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> "In the mythology of the ancient Greeks there was a celebrated hero, Antaeus, who, so the legend goes, was the son of Poseidon, god of the seas, and Gaea, goddess of the earth. Antaeus was very much attached to the mother who had given birth to him, suckled him and reared him. There was not a hero whom this Antaeus did not vanquish. He was regarded as an invincible hero. Wherein lay his strength? It lay in the fact that every time he was hard

pressed in a fight with an adversary he would touch the earth, the mother who had given birth to him and suckled him, and that gave him new strength. Yet he had a vulnerable spot—the danger of being detached from the earth in some way or other. His enemies were aware of this weakness and watched for him. One day an enemy appeared who took advantage of this vulnerable spot and vanquished Antaeus. This was Hercules. How did Hercules vanquish Antaeus? He lifted him from the earth, kept him suspended in the air, prevented him from touching the earth, and throttled him.

"I think that the Bolsheviks remind us of the hero of Greek mythology, Antaeus. They, like Antaeus, are strong because they maintain connection with their mother, the masses, who gave birth to them, suckled them and reared them. And as long as they maintain connection with their mother, with the people, they have every chance of remaining invincible.

"That is the clue to the invincibility of Bolshevik leadership." (J. Stalin, *Defects in Party Work.*)

Such are the chief lessons to be drawn from the historical path traversed by the Bolshevik Party.

Concluding Chapter of
History of the Communist
Party of the Soviet Union
(Bolsheviks)

The Land to the Peasants

The peasants of the Ryazan Gubernia have sent a statement to Minister Shingaryov to the effect that they will plough the land left uncultivated by the landlords even if the landlords do not give their consent. The peasants declare that it will be disastrous if the landlords refrain from planting, that immediate ploughing of untilled land is the only means of ensuring bread both for the population in the rear and for the army at the front.

In reply to this, Minister Shingaryov (see his telegram[1]) emphatically prohibits unauthorized ploughing, calling it "usurpation," and orders the peasants to wait until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly ; it, forsooth, will settle everything.

As, however, it is not known when the Constituent Assembly will be convened, since its convocation is being postponed by the Provisional Government, of which Mr. Shingaryov is a member, it follows that, *in fact,* the land is to remain unploughed, the landlords are to remain *in possession* of the land, the peasants *without* land, and Russia—the workers, the peasants and the soldiers—without sufficient bread.

And all this in order not to offend the landlords, even though Russia fall into the clutches of famine.

Such is the reply of the Provisional Government, of which Minister Shingaryov is a member.

This reply does not surprise us. A government of manufacturers and landlords cannot behave otherwise towards the peasants—what do they care about the peasants so long as all is well with the landlords ?

We, therefore, call upon the peasants, upon the peasant poor of all Russia, to take their cause into their own hands and push it forward.

We call upon them to organize and form revolutionary peasant committees (volost, uyezd, etc.), take over the landed estates through these committees, and cultivate the land in an organized manner without authorization.

We call upon them to do this without delay, not waiting for the Constituent Assembly and paying no attention to reactionary ministerial prohibitions which put spokes in the wheel of the revolution.

We are told that immediate seizure of the landed estates would disrupt the "unity" of the revolution by splitting off the "progressive strata" of society from it.

But it would be naive to think that it is possible to advance the revolution without quarrelling with the manufacturers and landlords.

Did not the workers "split off" the manufacturers and their ilk from the revolution when they introduced the eight-hour day? Who would venture to assert that the revolution has suffered from having alleviated the condition of the workers, from having shortened the working day?

Unauthorized cultivation of the landed estates and their seizure by the peasants will undoubtedly "split off" the landlords and their ilk from the revolution. But who would venture to assert that by rallying the millions of poor peasants around the revolution we shall be weakening the forces of the revolution?

People who want to influence the course of the revolution must realize once and for all:

1) That the main forces of our revolution are the workers and the poor peasants who, owing to the war, are now wearing soldier's uniform;

2) That as the revolution grows deeper and wider, the so-called "progressive elements," who are progressive in word but reactionary in deed, will "split off" from it inevitably.

It would be reactionary utopianism to retard this beneficent process of purging the revolution of unnecessary "elements."

The policy of waiting and procrastinating until the Constituent Assembly is convened, the policy recommended by the Narodniks, Trudoviks, and Mensheviks of "temporarily" denouncing confiscation, the policy of zigzagging between the classes (so as not to offend anybody!) and of shamefully marking time, is not the policy of the revolutionary proletariat.

The victorious onmarch of the Russian revolution will sweep it away like so much superfluous lumber that is suitable and advantageous only to the enemies of the revolution.

Pravda, No. 32.
April 14, 1917
Editorial
Signed: *K. Stalin*

The October Revolution and the Question of the Middle Strata

The question of the middle strata is undoubtedly one of the basic questions of the workers' revolution. The middle strata are the peasantry and the small urban working people. The oppressed nationalities, nine-tenths of whom consist of middle strata, should also be put in this category. As you see, these are the strata whose economic status puts them midway between the proletariat and the capitalist class. The relative importance of these strata is determined by two circumstances : firstly, these strata constitute the majority, or, at any rate, a large minority of the population of the existing states ; secondly, they constitute the important reserves from which the capitalist class recruits its army against the proletariat. The proletariat cannot retain power unless it enjoys the sympathy and support of the middle strata, primarily of the peasantry, especially in a country like our Union of Republics. The proletariat cannot even seriously contemplate seizing power if these strata have not been at least neutralised, if they have not yet managed to break away from the capitalist class, and if the bulk of them still serve as the army of capital. Hence the fight for the middle strata, the fight for the peasantry, which was a conspicuous feature of the whole of our revolution from 1905 to 1917, a fight which is still far from ended, and which will continue to be waged in the future.

One of the reasons for the defeat of the 1848 Revolution in France was that it failed to evoke a sympathetic response among the French peasantry. One of the reasons for the fall of the Paris Commune was that it encountered the opposition of the middle strata, especially of the peasantry. The same must be said of the Russian revolution of 1905.

Basing themselves on the experience of the European revolutions, certain vulgar Marxists, headed by Kautsky, came to the conclusion that the middle strata, especially the peasantry, are almost the born enemies of the workers' revolution, that, therefore, we must reckon with a lengthier period of development, as a result of which the proletariat will become the majority of the nation and the proper conditions for the victory of the workers' revolution will thereby be created. On the basis of that conclusion, they, these vulgar Marxists, warned the proletariat against "premature" revolution. On the basis of that conclusion, they, from "motives of principle," left the middle strata entirely at the disposal of capital. On the basis of that conclusion, they prophesied the doom of the Russian October Revolution, on the grounds that the proletariat in Russia constituted a minority, that Russia was a peasant country, and, therefore, a victorious workers' revolution in Russia was impossible.

It is noteworthy that Marx himself had an entirely different appraisal of the middle strata, especially of the peasantry. Whereas the vulgar Marxists, washing their hands of the peasantry and leaving it entirely at the political disposal of capital, noisily bragged about their "firm principles," Marx, the most true to principle of all Marxists, persistently advised the Communist Party not to lose sight of the peasantry, to win it over to the side of the proletariat and to make sure of its support in the future proletarian revolution. We know that in the fifties, after the defeat of the February Revolution in France and in Germany, Marx wrote to Engels, and through him to the Communist Party of Germany :

> "The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility of backing the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasant War."[3]

That was written about the Germany of the 'fifties, a peasant country, where the proletariat comprised a small minority, where the proletariat was less organised than the proletariat was in Russia in 1917, and where the peasantry, owing to its position, was less disposed to support a proletarian revolution than the peasantry in Russia in 1917.

The October Revolution undoubtedly represented that happy combination of a "peasant war" and a "proletarian revolution" of which Marx wrote, despite all the "highly principled" chatterboxes. The October Revolution proved that such a combination is possible and can be brought about. The October Revolution proved that the proletariat can seize power and retain it, if it succeeds in wresting the middle strata, primarily the peasantry, from the capitalist class, if it succeeds in converting these strata from reserves of capital into reserves of the proletariat.

In brief : the October Revolution was the first of all the revolutions in the world to bring into the forefront the question of the middle strata, and primarily of the peasantry, and the first to solve it successfully, despite all the "theories" and lamentations of the heroes of the Second International.

That is the first merit of the October Revolution, if one may speak of merit in such a connection.

But the matter did not stop there. The October Revolution went further and tried to rally the oppressed nationalities around the proletariat. We have already said above that nine-tenths of the populations of these nationalities consist of peasants and of small urban working people. That, however, does not exhaust the concept "oppressed nationality." Oppressed nationalities are usually oppressed not only as peasants and as urban working people, but also as nationalities, i.e., as the toilers of a definite nationality, language, culture, manner of life, habits and customs. The double oppression cannot help revolutionising the labouring masses of the oppressed nationalities, cannot help impelling them to fight the principal force of oppression—capital. This circumstance formed the basis on which the proletariat succeeded in combining the "proletarian revolution" not only with a "peasant war," but also with a "national war." All this could not fail to extend the field of action of the proletarian revolution far beyond the borders of Russia ; it could not fail to jeopardise the deepest reserves of capital. Whereas the fight for the middle strata of a given dominant nationality is a fight for the immediate reserves of capital, the fight for the emancipation of the oppressed nationalities could not help becoming a fight to win particular reserves of capital, the deepest of them, a fight to liberate the colonial and unequal peoples from the yoke of capital. This latter fight is still far from ended. More than that, it has not yet achieved even the first decisive successes. But this fight for the deep reserves was started by the October Revolution, and it will undoubtedly expand, step by step, with the further development of imperialism, with the growth of the might of our Union of Republics, and with the development of the proletarian revolution in the West.

In brief : the October Revolution actually initiated the fight of the proletariat for the deep reserves of capital in the shape of the masses of the people in the oppressed and unequal countries ; it was the first to raise the banner of the struggle to win these reserves. That is its second merit.

In our country the peasantry was won over under the banner of socialism. The peasantry received land at the hands of the proletariat, defeated the landlords with the aid of the proletariat and rose to power under the leadership of the proletariat ; consequently, it could not but feel, could not but realise, that the process of its emancipation was proceeding, and would continue, under the banner of the proletariat, under its red banner. This could not but convert the banner of socialism, which was formerly a bogey to the peasantry, into a banner which won its attention and aided its emancipation from subjection, poverty and oppression.

The same is true, but to an even greater degree, of the oppressed nationalities. The battle-cry for the emancipation of the nationalities, backed by such facts as the liberation of Finland, the withdrawal of troops from Persia and China, the formation of the Union of Republics, the moral support openly given to the peoples of Turkey, China, Hindustan and Egypt—this battle-cry was first sounded by the people who were the victors in the October Revolution. The fact that Russia, which was formerly regarded by the oppressed nationalities as a symbol of oppression, has now, after it has become socialist, been transformed into a symbol of emancipation, cannot be called an accident. Nor is it an accident that the name of the leader of the October Revolution, Comrade Lenin, is now the most beloved name pronounced by the downtrodden, oppressed peasants and revolutionary intelligentsia of the colonial and unequal countries. In the past, the oppressed and downtrodden slaves of the vast Roman Empire regarded Christianity as a rock of salvation. We are now reaching the point where socialism may serve (and is already beginning to serve !) as the banner of liberation for the millions who inhabit the vast colonial states of imperialism. It can hardly be doubted that this circumstance has greatly facilitated the task of combating prejudices against socialism, and has cleared the way for the penetration of socialist ideas into the most remote corners of the oppressed countries. Formerly it was difficult for a Socialist to come out openly among the non-proletarian, middle strata of the oppressed or oppressor countries ; but today he can come forward openly and advocate socialist ideas among these strata and expect to be listened to, and even heeded, for he is backed by so cogent an argument as the October Revolution. That, too, is a result of the October Revolution.

In brief : the October Revolution cleared the way for socialist ideas among the middle, non-proletarian, peasant strata of all nationalities and races ; it made the banner of socialism popular among them. That is the third merit of the October Revolution.

Pravda, No. 253,
November 7, 1923
Signed : *J. Stalin*

The Peasantry as an Ally of the Working Class

Reply to Comrades P. F. Boltnev, V. I. Efremov and V. I. Ivlev

I apologise for not having been able to reply to you sooner.

I did not say anywhere in my speech[3] that the working class needs the peasantry as an ally only at the present time.

I did not say in that speech that after the victory of the revolution in one of the European countries the alliance of the working class and the peasantry would be superfluous in Russia. It seems to me that you have not read my speech at the Moscow Conference very carefully.

What is stated there is only that "the peasantry is the only ally that can be of direct assistance to our revolution *at this very moment.*". Does it follow from this that after a victorious revolution in Europe the peasantry may become superfluous for the working class of our country ? Of course not.

You ask : "What will happen when the world revolution takes place, when the fourth ally—the peasantry—is no longer needed ? How will it be looked upon then ?"

In the first place, to say that "after the world revolution" the peasantry will no longer be needed is untrue. It is untrue, because "after the world revolution" our economic constructive work should proceed with giant strides, and socialism cannot be built without the peasantry, any more than the peasantry can extricate itself from its poverty without the proletariat. Consequently, far from weakening after a victorious revolution in the West, the alliance of the workers and peasants should grow stronger.

Secondly, "after the world revolution," when our constructive work is intensified a hundredfold, the trend will be for the workers and peasants to disappear as two entirely different economic groups, to be converted into working people of the land and of the factories, that is, to become equal in economic status. And what does that mean ? It means that the alliance of the workers and peasants will gradually be converted into a fusion, a complete union, into a single socialist society of former workers and former peasants, and later simply of working people of a socialist society.

That is our view as regards the peasantry "after the victory of the world revolution."

The matter at issue in my speech was not how our Party would look upon the peasantry in the future, but which of the four allies of the working class is its most direct ally and immediate assistant at the present moment, at the present juncture, when the capitalists in the West are to some extent beginning to recuperate.

Why did I present the question in my speech precisely in this light? Because there are people in our Party who, out of stupidity and folly, believe that the peasantry is not our ally. Whether it is a good or a bad thing that there are such people in our Party is another matter, but the fact remains that there are. It was against such people that my speech was levelled, and I therefore pointed out that at the present juncture the peasantry is the most direct ally of the working class, and that those who sow distrust towards the peasantry may, without themselves realising it, wreck the cause of our revolution, that is to say, they may wreck both the cause of the workers and the cause of the peasants.

That is what I was talking about.

It seems to me that you are somewhat offended at my calling the peasantry a not very firm ally, an ally not as reliable as the proletariat of the capitalistically developed countries. I see that you have taken offence at this. But am I not right? Must I not tell the truth bluntly? Is it not true that at the time of the Kolchak and Denikin invasions the peasantry quite often vacillated, siding now with the workers, now with the generals? And were there not plenty of peasant volunteers in Denikin's and Kolchak's armies?

I am not blaming the peasants, because their vacillations are due to their inadequate political understanding. But, since I am a Communist, I must tell the truth bluntly. That is what Lenin taught us. And the truth is that at a difficult moment, when the workers were being hard pressed by Kolchak and Denikin, the peasantry did not always display sufficient staunchness and firmness as an ally of the working class.

Does this mean that we may wash our hands of the peasantry, as certain unwise comrades are doing now, who do not consider it an ally of the proletariat at all ? No. To wash our hands of the peasantry would be to commit a crime against both the workers and the peasants. We shall do everything in our power to raise the political understanding of the peasants, to enlighten them, to bring them closer to the working class, the leader of our revolution—and we shall see to it that the peasantry becomes the ever firmer and ever more reliable ally of the proletariat in our country.

And when the revolution breaks out in the West, the peasantry will become thoroughly firm and one of the most loyal allies of the working class in our country.

That is how the attitude of the Communists towards the peasantry as an ally of the working class should be understood.

With comradely greetings,

J. Stalin

February 9, 1926

Published for the first time

The Party's Three Fundamental Slogans on the Peasant Question

Reply to Yan—sky

I duly received your letter, of course. I am replying after some delay, for which please forgive me.

1) Lenin says that *"the main question of every revolution is the question of state power"* (see Vol. XXI, p. 142). In the hands of which class, or which classes, is power concentrated; which class, or which classes, must be overthrown; which class, or which classes, must take power—such is "the main question of every revolution."

The Party's fundamental strategic slogans, which retain their validity during the whole period of any particular stage of the revolution, cannot be called fundamental slogans if they are not wholly and entirely based on this cardinal thesis of Lenin's.

Fundamental slogans can be correct only if they are based on a Marxist analysis of class forces, if they indicate the correct plan of disposition of the revolutionary forces on the front of the class struggle, if they help to bring the masses to the front of the struggle for the victory of the revolution, to the front of the struggle for the seizure of power by the new class, if they help the Party to form from the broad masses of the people the large and powerful political army which is essential for the fulfilment of this task.

During any particular stage of the revolution there may occur defeats and retreats, failures and tactical errors, but that does not mean that the fundamental strategic slogan is wrong. Thus, for instance, the fundamental slogan at the *first* stage of our revolution—"together with the whole of the peasantry, against the tsar and the landlords, while neutralising the bourgeoisie, for the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution"—was an absolutely correct slogan, in spite of the fact that the Revolution of 1905 suffered defeat.

Consequently, the question of the fundamental slogan of the Party must not be confused with the question of the successes or failures of the revolution at any particular stage of its development.

It may happen that in the course of the revolution the fundamental slogan of the Party has already led to the overthrow of the power of the old classes, or of the old class, but a number of vital demands of the revolution, arising out of that slogan, have not been achieved, or their achievement has been spread over a whole period of time, or a new revolution may be required for their achievement; but this does not mean that the fundamental slogan was wrong. Thus, for instance, the February Revolution of 1917 overthrew tsardom and the landlords, but did not lead to the confiscation of the landlords' land, etc., but this does not mean that our fundamental slogan at the first stage of the revolution was wrong.

Or another example: the October Revolution overthrew the bourgeoisie and transferred power to the proletariat, but did not immediately lead to: a) the completion of the bourgeois revolution, in general, and b) the isolation of the kulaks in the countryside, in particular—these were spread over a certain period of time: but this does not mean that our fundamental slogan at the *second* stage of the revolution—"together with the poor peasantry, against capitalism in town and country, while neutralising the middle peasantry, for the power of the proletariat"—was wrong.

Consequently, the question of the fundamental slogan of the Party must not be confused with the question of the time and forms of achieving particular demands arising out of that slogan.

That is why the strategic slogans of our Party must not be appraised from the point of view of episodical successes or defeats of the revolutionary movement in any particular period; still less can they be appraised from the point of view of the time or forms of achieving any particular demands that arise out of those slogans. The strategic slogans of the Party can be appraised only from the point of view of a Marxist analysis of the class forces and of the correct disposition of the revolutionary forces on the front of the struggle for the victory of the revolution, for the concentration of power in the hands of the new class.

Your error consists in overlooking this extremely important methodological question, or not understanding it.

2) You write in your letter:

> "Is it correct to assert that we were in alliance with the whole of the peasantry *only* up to October? No, it is not. The slogan 'alliance with the whole of the peasantry' was valid before October, *during October and in the first period after October,* inasmuch as the whole of the peasantry was interested in completing the bourgeois revolution."

Thus, from this quotation it follows that the strategic slogan of the Party at the *first* stage of the revolution (1905 to February 1917), when the task was to overthrow the power of the tsar and the landlords and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, *did not differ* from the strategic slogan at the *second* stage of the revolution (February 1917 to October 1917), when the task was to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Consequently, you deny the fundamental difference between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the proletarian-socialist revolution. You commit this error because, evidently, you refuse to understand so simple a matter as that the fundamental theme of a strategic slogan is the question of power at the particular stage of the revolution, the question as *to which* class is being overthrown and into the hands *of which* class power is being transferred. It scarcely needs proof that on this point you are radically wrong.

You say that at the time of October and in the first period after October we applied the slogan, "alliance with the *whole* of the peasantry," inasmuch as the whole peasantry was interested in completing the bourgeois revolutoin. But who told you that the October uprising and the October Revolution were confined to, or took as their main task, the completion of the bourgeois revolution? Where did you get that from? Is it possible for the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat to be effected within the framework of the bourgeois revolution? Does not the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat mean going beyond the framework of the bourgeois revolution?

How can it be asserted that the kulaks (who, of course, are also peasants) could support the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the transfer of power to the proletariat?

How can it be denied that the decree on the nationalisation of the land, the abolition of private ownership of land, the prohibition of the purchase and sale of land, etc., in spite of the fact that it cannot be regarded as a socialist decree, was put into effect by us in a *struggle* against the kulaks, and not in alliance with them?

How can it be asserted that the kulaks (who are also peasants) could support the decrees of the Soviet government on the expropriation of mills, factories, railways, banks, etc., or the slogan of the proletariat on transforming the imperialist war into a civil war?

How can it be asserted that the *fundamental* thing in October was not these and similar acts, not the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but the completion of the bourgeois revolution?

No one denies that one of the main tasks of the October Revolution was to complete the bourgeois revolution, that without the October Revolution it could not have been completed, just as the October Revolution itself could not have been consolidated without completing the bourgeois revolution: and since the October Revolution did complete the bourgeois revolution it was bound to meet with the sympathy of all the peasants. All that is undeniable. But can it be asserted on these grounds that the completion of the bourgeois revolution was not a *derivative phenomenon* in the course of the October Revolution but its *essence* or its *principal* aim? What then, according to you, has become of the principal aim of the October Revolution, namely, the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war, the expropriation of the capitalists, etc.?

And if the main theme of a strategic slogan is the fundamental question of every revolution, i.e., the question of the transfer of power from one class to another class, is it not clear from this that the question of the completion of the bourgeois revolution by the proletarian power must not be confused with the question of overthrowing the bourgeoisie and achieving this proletarian power, i.e., with the question that is the main theme of the strategic slogan at the second stage of the revolution?

One of the greatest achievements of the dictatorship of the proletariat is that it completed the bourgeois revolution and swept away all the filth of medievalism. For the countryside that was of supreme and indeed decisive importance. Without it the combination of peasant wars with the proletarian revolution, of which Marx spoke in the second half of the past century,[4] could not have been brought about. Without it, the proletarian revolution itself could not have been consolidated.

Moreover, the following important circumstance must be borne in mind. The completion of the bourgeois revolution cannot be accomplished at one stroke. Actually, it was spread over a whole period embracing not only parts of 1918, as you assert in your letter, but also parts of 1919 (the Volga area and the Urals) and of 1919-20 (the Ukraine). I am referring to the advance of Kolchak and Denikin, when the peasantry as a whole was faced with the danger of the restoration of the power of the landlords and when the peasantry, precisely as a *whole,* was compelled to rally around the Soviet power in order to ensure the completion of the bourgeois revolution and to retain the fruits of that revolution. This complexity and diversity of the processes of living reality, this "odd" interweaving of the directly socialist tasks of the proletarian dictatorship with the task of completing the bourgeois revolution, must always be kept in mind in order correctly to understand the passages you quote from the works of Lenin and the mechanics of putting the Party's slogans into effect.

Can it be said that this interweaving indicates that the Party's slogan at the *second* stage of the revolution was wrong, and that this slogan did not differ from the slogan at the *first* stage of the revolution ? No, it cannot. On the contrary, this interweaving merely confirms the correctness of the Party's slogan at the second stage of the revolution : together with the *poor* peasantry, against the capitalist bourgeoisie in town and country, for the power of the proletariat, etc. Why ? Because in order to complete the bourgeois revolution it was necessary in October *first* to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and to set up the power of the proletariat, for only such a power is capable of completing the bourgeois revolution. But in order to set up the power of the proletariat in October it was essential to prepare and organise for October the *appropriate* political army, an army capable of overthrowing the bourgeoisie and of establishing the power of the proletariat ; and there is no need to prove that *such* a political army could be prepared and organised by us *only* under the slogan: alliance of the proletariat with the poor peasantry against the bourgeoisie, for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is clear that without *such* a strategic slogan, which we carried through from April 1917 until October 1917, we could not have had *such* a political army, and that, therefore, we could not have triumphed in October, we would not have overthrown the power of the bourgeoisie and, consequently, we would not have been able to complete the bourgeois revolution.

That is why the completion of the bourgeois revolution must not be counterposed to the strategic slogan at the second stage of the revolution, a slogan which had the task of ensuring the seizure of power by the proletariat.

There is only one way to avoid all these "contradictions," namely, to recognise the fundamental difference between the strategic slogan of the first stage of the revolution (the bourgeois-democratic revolution) and the strategic slogan of the second stage of the revolution (the proletarian revolution), to recognise that during the first stage of the revolution we marched together with the *whole* of the peasantry for the bourgeois-democratic revolution, whereas during the second stage of the revolution we marched together with the *poor* peasantry against the power of capital and for the proletarian revolution.

And this must be recognised because an analysis of the class forces at the first and second stages of the revolution obliges us to do so. Otherwise it would be impossible to explain the fact that until February 1917 we carried on our work under the slogan of a revolutionary-*democratic* dictatorship of the proletariat and *peasantry,* while after February 1917 this slogan was replaced by the slogan of the *socialist* dictatorship of the proletariat and *poor* peasantry.

You will agree that this replacement of one slogan by another in March-April 1917 cannot be explained under your scheme.

This fundamental difference between the two strategic slogans of the Party was already pointed out by Lenin in his pamphlet *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution.* He formulated the Party's slogan in preparing for the bourgeois-democratic revolution as follows:

> "The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by

force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie" (see Vol. VIII, p. 96).

In other words : with the whole of the peasantry against the autocracy, while neutralising the bourgeoisie—for a democratic revolution.

As to the Party's slogan in the period of preparation for the socialist revolution, he formulated it as follows :

> "The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie" (*ibid.*).

In other words : together with the poor peasantry and the semi-proletarian strata of the population in general, against the bourgeoisie, while neutralising the petty bourgeoisie in town and country, for the socialist revolution.

That was in 1905.

In April 1917, Lenin, characterising the political situation at that time as the interweaving of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry with the actual power of the bourgeoisie, said :

> "The specific feature of the present situation in Russia consists in the *transition* from the *first** stage of the revolution—which, owing to the insufficient class consciousness and organisation of the proletariat, placed the power in the hands of the bourgeoisie—*to the second* stage, which must place the power in the hands of the proletariat and the *poor strata** of the peasantry" (see *Lenin's* April Theses—Vol. XX, p. 88).

At the end of August 1917, when the preparations for the October Revolution were in full swing, Lenin, in a special article entitled "Peasants and Workers", wrote as follows :

> "Only the proletariat and the *peasantry** can overthrow the monarchy—such was the fundamental definition of our class policy for that time (it refers to 1905.—*J. St.*). And that definition was a correct one. February and March 1917 have confirmed this once again. Only the proletariat, leading the *poor peasantry** (the semi-proletarians, as our programme says), can end the war by a democratic peace, heal the wounds it has caused, and begin to take steps towards socialism, which have become absolutely essential and *urgent*—such is the definition of our class policy now" (see Vol. XXI, p. 111).

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

That must not be understood to mean that we *now* have a dictatorship of the proletariat *and* poor peasantry. That, of course, is not so. We marched towards October under the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry, and in October we put it into effect formally inasmuch as we had a bloc with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and shared the leadership with them, although actually the dictatorship of the proletariat already existed, since we Bolsheviks constituted the majority. The dictatorship of the proletariat *and* poor peasantry ceased to exist formally, however, after the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries' "putsch,"[5] after the rupture of the bloc with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, when the leadership passed *wholly* and *entirely* into the hands of *one* party, into the hands of our Party, which does not and cannot share the leadership of the state with another party. That is what we call the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Finally, in November 1918, Lenin, casting a retrospective glance at the path the revolution had travelled, wrote :

> "Yes, our revolution is a bourgeois revolution *so long* as we march *with* the peasantry *as a whole*. This has been as clear as clear can be to us ; we have said it hundreds and thousands of times since 1905, and we have never attempted to skip this necessary stage of the historical process or abolish it by decrees. . . . But in 1917, beginning with *April, long before the October Revolution, before we seized** power, we publicly declared and explained to the people : the revolution cannot now stop at this stage, for the country has gone forward, capitalism has advanced, ruin has reached unprecedented dimensions, which (whether one likes it or not) will *demand* steps forward, *to socialism ;* for there is *no other way of* advancing, of saving the country, which is racked by war, and of *alleviating* the sufferings of the toilers and exploited. Things turned out just as we said they would. The course taken by the revolution confirmed the correctness of our reasoning. *First,* with the 'whole' of the peasantry against the monarchy, against the landlords, against the medieval regime (and to that extent the revolution remains bourgeois, bourgeois-democratic). *Then,* with the poor peasantry, with the semi-proletarians, with all the exploited, *against capitalism,* including *the rural rich, the kulaks, the profiteers,** and to that extent the revolution becomes a *socialist* one" (see Vol. XXIII, pp. 390-91).

As you see, Lenin repeatedly emphasised the profound difference between the first strategic slogan, in the period of preparation for the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and the second strategic slogan, in the period of preparation for October. The first slogan was : with *the whole of the peasantry* against the autocracy ; the second : with *the poor peasantry* against the bourgeoisie.

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

The fact that the completion of the bourgeois revolution was spread over a whole period after October and that, inasmuch as we were completing the bourgeois revolution, the "whole" of the peasantry could not but sympathise with us—this fact, as I said above, does not in the least shake the fundamental thesis that we marched towards October and achieved victory in October together with the *poor peasantry,* that we overthrew the power of the bourgeoisie and established the dictatorship of the proletariat (one of the tasks of which was to complete the bourgeois revolution) together with the *poor peasantry,* against the resistance of the kulaks (also peasants) and with the middle peasantry vacillating.

That is clear, I think.

3) You write further in your letter :

> "Is the assertion true that *'we arrived at October* under the slogan of *alliance with the rural poor, while neutralising the middle peasant'* ? No, it is not true. For the reasons mentioned above, and from the quotations from Lenin, it will be seen that this slogan could arise only when 'the class division among the peasantry had matured' (Lenin), i.e., 'in the summer and autumn of 1918.' "

From this quotation it follows that the Party adopted the policy of neutralising the middle peasant, not in the period of preparation for October and during October, but after October, and particularly after 1918, subsequent to the Committees of Poor Peasants. That is *quite wrong.*

On the contrary, the policy of neutralising the middle peasant did not begin, but *ended* subsequent to the Committees of Poor Peasants, after 1918. The policy of neutralising the middle peasant was *abolished* (and not introduced) in our practical work after 1918. It was after 1918, in March 1919, that Lenin, opening the Eighth Congress of our Party, stated :

> "The best representatives of socialism of the old days—when they still believed in revolution and served it theoretically and ideologically—spoke of *neutralising the peasantry,* i.e., of turning the middle peasantry into a social stratum which, if it did not actively aid the revolution of

the proletariat, at least would not hinder it, would be neutral and not take the side of our enemies. This abstract, theoretical presentation of the problem is perfectly clear to us. _But it is not enough._* We have entered a _phase of socialist construction_* in which we must draw up concrete and detailed basic rules and instructions which have been tested by the experience of our work in the countryside, and by which we must be guided in order _to achieve a stable alliance_ with the middle peasantry" (see Vol. XXIV, p. 114).

As you see, this amounts to the very opposite of what you say in your letter; you turn our _actual_ Party practice upside down by confusing the _beginning_ of neutralisation with its _end_.

The middle peasant whined and wavered between revolution and counter-revolution while the bourgeoisie was being overthrown and while the power of the Soviets was not consolidated; therefore it was necessary to neutralise him. The middle peasant began to turn towards us when he began to be convinced that the bourgeoisie had been overthrown "for good," that the power of the Soviets was being consolidated, that the kulak was being overcome and that the Red Army was beginning to achieve victory on the fronts of the Civil War. And it was precisely after this turning point that the third strategic slogan of the Party, issued by Lenin at the Eighth Party Congress, became possible, namely: while _relying_ on the poor peasants and establishing a _stable alliance_ with the middle peasants—forward to socialist construction!

How could you forget this well-known fact?

From your letter it also follows that the policy of neutralising the middle peasant _during the transition_ to the proletarian revolution and in the _first days_ after the victory of that revolution is wrong, unsuitable and therefore unacceptable. That is _quite wrong_. The very opposite is the case. It is precisely while the power of the bourgeoisie is being overthrown and before the power of the proletariat has been consolidated that the middle peasant wavers and resists most of all. It is precisely in this period that alliance with the poor peasant and neutralisation of the middle peasant are necessary.

Persisting in your error, you assert that the question of the peasantry is very important, not only for our country, but also for other countries "which more or less resemble the economic system of pre-October Russia." This latter statement is, of course, true. But here is what Lenin said in his theses on the agrarian question at the Second Congress of the Comintern[6] regarding the policy of proletarian parties towards the middle peasant in the period when the proletariat is taking power. After defining the poor peasantry, or more precisely, "the toiling and exploited masses in the countryside," as a separate group consisting of agricultural labourers, semi-proletarians, or allotment holders and small peasants, and then passing to the question of the middle peasantry as a separate group in the countryside, Lenin says :

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* My italics.—_J. St._

> "By 'middle peasants' in the economic sense are meant small cultivators who also hold, either as owners or tenants, small plots of land, but such, firstly, as, under capitalism, provide them as a general rule not only with a meagre upkeep for their families and households, but also with the possibility of securing a certain surplus, which, at least in the better years, may be converted into capital ; and, secondly, fairly frequently (for example, one farm out of two or three) resort to the hire of outside labour. . . . The revolutionary proletariat cannot set itself the task—at least *in the immediate future and in the initial period of the dictatorship of the proletariat*—of winning over this stratum, but must *confine itself to the task of neutralising it*, i.e., making it neutral in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie"* (see Vol. XXV, pp. 271-72).

How, after this, can it be asserted that the policy of neutralising the middle peasant "arose" in our country *"only"* "in the summer and autumn of 1918," i.e., *after* the decisive successes achieved in consolidating the power of the Soviets, the power of the proletariat ?

As you see, the question of the strategic slogan of proletarian parties at the moment of transition to the socialist revolution and the consolidation of the power of the proletariat, as also the question of the neutralisation of the middle peasant, is not as simple as you imagine.

4) From all that has been said above, it is evident that the passages from the works of Lenin you quote can in no way be counterposed to the fundamental slogan of the Party at the second stage of the revolution, since these quotations : a) deal not with the fundamental slogan of the Party *before* October, but with

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

the completion of the bourgeois revolution *after* October, and b) do not refute, but confirm the correctness of that slogan.

I have already said above, and I must repeat, that the strategic slogan of the Party at the second stage of the revolution, in the period *before* the seizure of power by the proletariat, the main theme of which is the question of power, must not be counterposed to the task of completing the bourgeois revolution which is effected in the period *after* the proletariat has taken power.

5) You speak of Comrade Molotov's article in *Pravda* entitled "The Bourgeois Revolution in Our Country" (March 12, 1927), which, it appears, "induced" you to apply to me for an explanation. I do not known how you read articles. I, too, have read Comrade Molotov's article and I think that it does not in any way contradict what I said in my report at the Fourteenth Congress of our Party on our Party's slogans regarding the peasantry.[7]

In his article, Comrade Molotov does not deal with the Party's fundamental slogan in the period of October, but with the fact that, since the Party after October completed the bourgeois revolution, it enjoyed the sympathy of all the peasants. But I have already said above that the statement of this fact does not refute, but, on the contrary, confirms the correctness of the fundamental thesis that we overthrew the power of the bourgeoisie and established the dictatorship of the proletariat together with the poor peasantry, while neutralising the middle peasant, against the bourgeoisie of town and country; that without this we could not have completed the bourgeois revolution.

Bolshevik, No. 7-8,
April 15, 1927

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The Slogan of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Poor Peasantry in the Period of Preparation for October

Reply to S. Pokrovsky

I think that your letter of May 2 of this year provides neither occasion nor grounds for a reply in detail, point by point, so to speak.

As a matter of fact, it offers nothing particularly new as compared with Yan—sky's letter.

If, nevertheless, I am replying to your letter it is because it contains certain elements of a direct revival of Kamenev's ideas of the period of April-May 1917. It is only in order to expose these elements of a revival of Kamenev's ideas that I consider it necessary to reply briefly to your letter.

1) You say in your letter that "in fact, in the period from February to October we had the slogan of alliance *with the whole* of the peasantry," that "in the period from February to October the Party upheld and defended its *old* slogan in relation to the peasantry—alliance *with the whole* peasantry."

It follows, firstly, that in the period of preparation for October (April-October 1917) the Bolsheviks did not set themselves the task of drawing a demarcation line between the poor peasants and the well-to-do peasants, but treated the peasantry as an integral whole.

It follows, secondly, that in the period of preparation for October the Bolsheviks did not replace the old slogan of "dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" by a new slogan, "dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry," but maintained the old position laid down in Lenin's pamphlet *Two Tactics* in 1905.

It follows, thirdly, that the Bolshevik policy of combating the vacillations and compromising policy of the Soviets in the period of preparation for October (March-October 1917), the vacillations of the middle peasantry in the Soviets and at the front, the vacillations between revolution and counter-revolution, the vacillations and compromising policy which assumed a particularly acute character in the July days, when the Soviets, headed by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik compromisers, joined hands with the counter-revolutionary generals in the attempt to isolate the Bolsheviks—it appears that the Bolshevik fight against these vacillations and the compromising policy of certain strata of the peasantry was pointless and absolutely unnecessary.

It follows, finally, that Kamenev was right when, in April-May 1917, he defended the old slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, while Lenin, who regarded this slogan as already out-of-date and who proclaimed the new slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry, was wrong.

One need only raise these issues to realise the utter absurdity of your letter as a whole.

But since you are very fond of isolated quotations from Lenin's works, let us turn to quotations.

It does not require much effort to prove that what Lenin regarded as *new* in the agrarian relations in Russia after the February Revolution, from the point of view of the further development of the revolution, was not a community of interests of the proletariat and the peasantry as a whole, but the *cleavage* between the poor peasantry and the well-to-do peasantry, of whom the former, i.e., the poor peasantry, gravitated towards the proletariat, whereas the latter, i.e., the well-to-do peasantry, followed the Provisional Government.

Here is what Lenin said on this score in *April* 1917, in his polemic against Kamenev and Kamenev's ideas :

> "It would be impermissible for the proletarian party *now** to place hopes in a community of interests with the peasantry" (see *Lenin's* speech at the April Conference, 1917, Vol. XX, p. 245).

Further :

> "Already we can discern in the decisions of a number of peasant congresses the idea of postponing the solution of the agrarian question until the Constituent Assembly ; this represents a victory for the *well-to-do peasantry*,* which inclines towards the Cadets" (see *Lenin's* speech at the Petrograd City Conference, April 1917, Vol. XX, p. 176).

Further :

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

> "It is possible that the peasantry may seize all the land and the entire power. Far from forgetting this possibility, far from limiting my outlook to the present day alone, I definitely and clearly formulate the agrarian programme, taking into account the *new* phenomenon, i.e., the deeper *cleavage** between the agricultural labourers and poor peasants on the one hand, and the prosperous peasants on the other" (see *Lenin's* article written in April, "Letters on Tactics," Vol. XX, p. 103).

That is what Lenin regarded as *new* and *important* in the new situation in the countryside *after* the February Revolution.

That was Lenin's starting point in shaping the Party's policy in the period after February 1917.

That thesis was Lenin's starting point when, at the Petrograd City Conference in April 1917, he said :

> "It was only here, on the spot, that we learned that the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies had surrendered its power to the Provisional Government. The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies represents the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and soldiers ; among the latter, the majority are peasants. This is the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. But this 'dictatorship' has entered into an agreement with the bourgeoisie. And it is here that *a revision of the 'old' Bolshevism* is needed"* (see Vol. XX, p. 176).

That thesis also was Lenin's starting point when, in April 1917, he wrote :

> "Whoever speaks *now* only of a 'revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry' is behind the times, has consequently in fact *gone over* to the side of the petty bourgeoisie against the proletarian class struggle. He deserves to be consigned to the archive of 'Bolshevik' pre-revolutionary antiques (which might be called the archive of 'Old Bolsheviks')" (see Vol. XX, pp. 101).

It was on this basis that there arose the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and *poor* peasantry *in place of* the old slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.

You may say, as indeed you do in your letter, that this is a Trotskyist skipping over of the still uncompleted peasant revolution ; but that would be just as convincing as the similar objection which Kamenev raised against Lenin in April 1917.

Lenin took this objection fully into account when he said :

> "Trotskyism says : 'No tsar, but a workers' government.' That is incorrect. The petty bourgeoisie exists, and it cannot be left out of

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

account. But it consists of two sections. The *poorer** section follows the working class" (see Vol. XX, p. 182).

Kamenev's error, and now yours, consists in the inability to discern and emphasise the difference between the two sections of the petty bourgeoisie, in this case the peasantry; in the inability to *single out* the poor section of the peasantry from the mass of the peasantry as a whole, and on that basis *to shape* the Party's policy in the situation of the transition from the first stage of the revolution in 1917 to its second stage; in the inability to *deduce* from this the new slogan, the Party's second strategic slogan, concerning the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry.

Let us trace in consecutive order in Lenin's works the practical history of the slogan "dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry" from April to October 1917.

April 1917:

> "The specific feature of the present situation in Russia consists in the *transition* from the *first** stage of the revolution—which, owing to the insufficient class consciousness and organisation of the proletariat, placed the power in the hands of the bourgeoisie—*to the second* stage, which must place the power in the hands of the proletariat and the "*poor strata of the peasantry*"* (see *Lenin's* April Theses, Vol. XX, p. 88).

July 1917:

> "Only the revolutionary workers, if they are supported by the *poor peasants,** are capable of smashing the resistance of the capitalists and leading the people to win the land without compensation, to complete freedom, to victory over famine, to victory over war, and to a just and lasting peace" (see Vol. XXI, p. 77).

August 1917:

> "Only the proletariat, leading the *poor peasantry** (the semi-proletarians, as our programme says), can end the war by a democratic peace, heal the wounds it has caused, and begin to take steps towards socialism, which have become absolutely essential and *urgent*—such is the definition of our class policy now" (see Vol. XXI, p. 111).

September 1917:

> "Only a dictatorship of the proletarians and the *poor peasants** is capable of smashing the resistance of the capitalists, of displaying really supreme courage and determination in the exercise of power, and of securing the enthusiastic, selfless and truly heroic support of the masses both in the army and among the peasantry" (see Vol. XXI, p. 147).

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

September-October 1917, the pamphlet *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?*, in which Lenin, in controversy with *Novaya Zhizn*,[8] says :

> "*Either** all power to the bourgeoisie—which you have long ceased to advocate, and which the bourgeoisie itself dare not even hint at, for it knows that already on April 20-21 the people overthrew that power with one heave of the shoulder, and would overthrow it now with thrice that determination and ruthlessness. *Or** power to the petty bourgeoisie, i.e., a coalition (alliance, agreement) between it and the bourgeoisie, for the petty bourgeoisie does not wish to and *cannot* take power alone and independently, as has been proved by the experience of all revolutions, and as is proved by economic science, which explains that in a capitalist country it is possible to stand for capital and it is possible to stand for labour, but it is impossible to stand in between. In Russia this coalition has for six months tried scores of ways but failed. *Or,** finally, all power to the proletarians and the *poor peasants** against the bourgeoisie in order to break its resistance. This has not yet been tried, and you, gentlemen of *Novaya Zhizn*, are *dissuading* the people from this, trying to frighten them with your own fear of the bourgeoisie. No fourth way can be invented" (see Vol. XXI, p. 275).

Such are the facts.

You "successfully" *evade* all these facts and events in the history of the preparation for October ; you "successfully" *erase* from the history of Bolshevism the *struggle* waged by the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October against the *vacillations* and the *compromising* policy of the "prosperous peasants" who were in the Soviets at that time ; you "successfully" *bury* Lenin's slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry, and at the same time imagine that this is not to do *violence* to history, to Leninism.

From these quotations, which could be multiplied, you must see that the Bolsheviks took as their starting point after February 1917 not the peasantry as a whole, but the poor section of the peasantry ; that they marched towards October not under the *old* slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, but under the *new* slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry.

From this it is evident that the Bolsheviks put this slogan into effect in a fight against the vacillations and compromising policy of the Soviets, against the vacillations and compromising policy of a certain section of the peasantry inside the Soviets, against the vacillations and compromising policy of certain parties representing petty-bourgeois democracy and known as Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

From this it is evident that without the new slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry we would have been unable to assemble a sufficiently powerful political army, one capable of overcoming the compromising policy of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, of neutralising the vacillations of a certain section of the peasantry, of overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie, and of thus making it possible to carry the bourgeois revolution to completion.

From this it is evident that "we marched towards October and achieved victory in October together with the poor peasantry against the resistance of the kulaks (also peasants) and with the middle peasantry vacillating" (see my reply to Yan—sky*).

Thus, it follows that in April 1917, as also during the whole period of preparation for October, it was Lenin who was right, and not Kamenev ; and you, by now reviving Kamenev's ideas, seem to be getting into not very good company.

2) As against all that has been said above you quote Lenin's words to the effect that in October 1917 we took power with the support of the peasantry *as a whole*. That we took power with a *certain amount* of support from the peasantry as a whole is quite true. But you forgot to add a "detail," namely, that the peasantry *as a whole* supported us in October, and after October, only *in so far* as we carried the bourgeois revolution to completion. That is a very important "detail," which in the present instance settles the issue. To "forget" such an important "detail" and thus slur over a most important issue is impermissible for a Bolshevik.

From your letter it is evident that you *counterpose* what Lenin said about the support of the peasantry *as a whole* to the Party's slogan of "dictatorship of the proletariat and *poor* peasantry," which was also advanced by Lenin. But in order to counterpose these words of Lenin to the previous quotations from the works of Lenin, in order to have grounds for refuting the previous quotations from Lenin on the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry by the words you quote from Lenin about the peasantry as a whole, two things, at least, must be proved.

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* See also page 88.

Firstly. It must be proved that the completion of the bourgeois revolution was the *main thing* in the October Revolution. Lenin considered that the completion of the bourgeois revolution was a *"by-product"* of the October Revolution, which fulfilled this task *"in passing."* You must first of all refute this thesis of Lenin's and prove that the *main thing* in the October Revolution was not the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and the transfer of power to the proletariat, but the completion of the bourgeois revolution. Try to prove that, and if you do I shall be ready to admit that from April to October 1917 the Party's slogan was not the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry, but the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.

From your letter it is evident that you do not think it possible to undertake this more than risky task ; you try, however, to prove "in passing" that on one of the most important questions of the October Revolution, the question of peace, we were supported by *all* the peasantry as a whole. That, of course, is untrue. It is quite untrue. On the question of peace you have slipped into the viewpoint of the philistine. As a matter of fact the question of peace was for us at that time a question of power, for only with the transfer of power to the proletariat could we count on extricating ourselves from the imperialist war.

You must have forgotten Lenin's words, that "the only way to stop the war is by the transfer of power to another class," and that " 'Down with the war' does not mean flinging away your bayonets. It means the transfer of power to another class" (see *Lenin's* speech at the Petrograd City Conference, April 1917, Vol. XX, pp. 181 and 178).

Thus, one thing or the other : either you must prove that the *main thing* in the October Revolution was the completion of the bourgeois revolution, or you cannot prove it ; in the latter case the obvious conclusion is that the peasantry *as a whole* could support us in October only *in so far* as we carried the bourgeois revolution to completion, doing away with the monarchy, and with the property and regime of the landlords.

Secondly. You must prove that the Bolsheviks could have secured the support of the peasantry as a whole in October and after October, in so far as they carried the bourgeois revolution to completion, *without* systematically putting into effect the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and *poor* peasantry during the whole period of preparation for October; *without* a systematic struggle, arising from this slogan, against the compromising policy of the petty-bourgeois parties; *without* a systematic exposure, arising from the same slogan, of the vacillations of certain strata of the peasantry and of their representatives in the Soviets.

Try to prove that. In point of fact, why did we succeed in securing the support of the peasantry as a whole in October and after October? Because we had the possibility of carrying the bourgeois revolution to completion.

Why did we have that possibility? Because we succeeded in overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie and replacing it by the power of the proletariat, which alone is able to carry the bourgeois revolution to completion.

Why did we succeed in overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie and establishing the power of the proletariat? Because we prepared for October under the slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and *poor* peasantry; because, proceeding from this slogan, we waged a systematic struggle against the compromising policy of the petty-bourgeois parties; because, proceeding from this slogan, we waged a systematic struggle against the vacillations of the middle peasantry in the Soviets; because *only with such a slogan* could we overcome the vacillations of the middle peasant, defeat the compromising policy of the petty-bourgeois parties, and rally a political army capable of waging the struggle for the transfer of power to the proletariat.

It scarcely needs proof that without these preliminary conditions, which determined the fate of the October Revolution, we could not have won the support of the peasantry *as a whole* for the task of completing the bourgeois revolution, either in October or after October.

That is how the combination of peasant wars with the proletarian revolution should be understood.

That is why to *counterpose* the support of the peasantry as a whole in October and after October as regards completing the bourgeois revolution to the fact of the preparation for the October Revolution under the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and *poor* peasantry means *to understand nothing of Leninism.*

Your principal error is that you have failed to understand either the fact of the interweaving during the October Revolution of *socialist* tasks with the tasks of completing the *bourgeois* revolution, or the mechanics of fulfilling the various demands of the October Revolution arising from the Party's second strategic slogan, the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry.

Reading your letter one might think that it was not we who took the peasantry into the service of the proletarian revolution, but, on the contrary, that it was "the peasantry as a whole," including the kulaks, who took the Bolsheviks into their service. Things would go badly with the Bolsheviks if they so easily "entered" the service of non-proletarian classes.

Kamenev's ideas of the period of April 1917—that is what is fettering you.

3) You assert that Stalin does not see any difference between the situation in 1905 and the situation in February 1917. That, of course, is not to be taken seriously. I never said that, and could not have said it. In my letter I said merely that the Party's slogan on the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, issued in 1905, received confirmation in the February Revolution of 1917. That, of course, is true. That is exactly how Lenin described the situation in his article "Peasants and Workers" in August 1917 :

> "Only the proletariat and the peasantry can overthrow the monarchy—such was the fundamental definition of our class policy for that time (it refers to 1905.—*J. St.*). And that definition was a correct one. *February and March 1917 have confirmed this once again*"* (see Vol. XXI, p. 111).

You simply want to find fault.

4) You try, further, to convict Stalin of contradicting himself, by counterposing his thesis on the compromising policy of the middle peasant *before October* to a quotation from Stalin's pamphlet *Problems of Leninism,* which speaks of the possibility of building socialism jointly with the middle peasantry *after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been consolidated.*

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

It does not require much effort to prove that such an identification of two different phenomena is utterly unscientific. The middle peasant before October, when the bourgeoisie was in power, and the middle peasant after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been consolidated, when the bourgeoisie has already been overthrown and expropriated, when the co-operative movement has developed and the principal means of production are concentrated in the hands of the proletariat, are two different things. To identify these two kinds of middle peasant and to put them on a par means to examine phenomena out of connection with their historical setting and to lose all sense of perspective. It is something like the Zinoviev manner of mixing up all dates and periods when quoting.

If that is what is called "revolutionary dialectics," it must be admitted that Pokrovsky has broken all records for "dialectical" quibbling.

5) I shall not touch on the remaining questions, for I think they have been exhaustively dealt with in the correspondence with Yan—sky.

May 20, 1927

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J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, 4th edition, 1928

On the Grain Front

From a Talk to Students of the Institute of Red Professors, the Communist Academy and the Sverdlov University
May 28, 1928

Question : What should be considered as the basic cause of our difficulties in the matter of the grain supply ? What is the way out of these difficulties ? What, in connection with these difficulties, are the conclusions that must be drawn as regards the rate of development of our industry, particularly from the point of view of the relation between the light and heavy industries ?

Answer : At first sight it may appear that our grain difficulties are an accident, the result merely of faulty planning, the result merely of a number of mistakes committed in the sphere of economic co-ordination.

But it may appear so only at first sight. Actually the causes of the difficulties lie much deeper. That faulty planning and mistakes in economic co-ordination have played a considerable part—of that there cannot be any doubt. But to attribute everything to faulty planning and chance mistakes would be a gross error. It would be an error to belittle the role and importance of planning. But it would be a still greater error to exaggerate the part played by the planning principle, in the belief that we have already reached a stage of development when it is possible to plan and regulate everything.

It must not be forgotten that in addition to elements which lend themselves to our planning activities there are also other elements in our national economy which do not as yet lend themselves to planning ; and that, lastly, there are classes hostile to us which cannot be overcome simply by the planning of the State Planning Commission.

That is why I think that we must not reduce everything to a mere accident, to mistakes in planning, etc.

And so, what is the basis of our difficulties on the grain front?

The basis of our grain difficulties lies in the fact that the increase in the production of marketable grain is not keeping pace with the increase in the demand for grain.

Industry is growing. The number of workers is growing. Towns are growing. And, lastly, the areas producing industrial crops (cotton, flax, sugar beet, etc.) are growing, creating a demand for grain. All this leads to a rapid increase in the demand for grain—grain available for the market. But the production of marketable grain is increasing at a disastrously slow rate.

It cannot be said that the grain stocks at the disposal of the state have been smaller this year than last, or the year before. On the contrary, we have had far more grain in the hands of the state this year than in previous years. Nevertheless, we are faced with difficulties as regards the grain supply.

Here are a few figures. In 1925-26 we managed to procure 434,000,000 poods of grain by April 1. Of this amount, 123,000,000 poods were exported. Thus, there remained in the country 311,000,000 poods of the grain procured. In 1926-27 we had procured 596,000,000 poods of grain by April 1. Of this amount, 153,000,000 poods were exported. There remained in the country 443,000,000 poods. In 1927-28 we had procured 576,000,000 poods of grain by April 1. Of this amount, 27,000,000 poods were exported. There remained in the country 549,000,000 poods.

In other words, this year, by April 1, the grain supplies available to meet the requirements of the country amounted to 100,000,000 poods more than last year, and 230,000,000 poods more than the year before last. Nevertheless, we are experiencing difficulties on the grain front this year.

I have already said in one of my reports that the capitalist elements in the countryside, and primarily the kulaks, took advantage of these difficulties in order to disrupt Soviet economic policy. You know that the Soviet Government adopted a number of measures aimed at putting a stop to the anti-Soviet action of the kulaks. I shall not therefore dwell on this matter here. In the present case it is another question that interests me. I have in mind the reasons for the slow increase in the production of marketable grain, the question why the increase in the production of marketable grain in our country is slower than the increase in the demand for grain, in spite of the fact that our crop area and the gross production of grain have already reached the pre-war level.

Indeed, is it not a fact that our grain crop area has already reached the pre-war mark? Yes, it is a fact. Is it not a fact that already last year the gross production of grain was equal to the pre-war output, i.e., 5,000 million poods? Yes, it is a fact. How, then, is it to be explained that, in spite of these circumstances, the amount of marketable grain we are producing is only one half, and the amount we are exporting is only about one-twentieth, of the pre-war figure.

The reason is primarily and chiefly the change in the structure of our agriculture brought about by the October Revolution, the passing from large-scale landlord and large-scale kulak farming, which provided the largest amount of marketable grain, to small and middle-peasant farming, which provides the smallest amount of marketable grain. The mere fact that before the war there were 15,000,000 to 16,000,000 individual peasant farms, whereas at present there are 24,000,000 to 25,000,000 peasant farms, shows that now the basis of our agriculture is essentially small-peasant farming, which provides the least amount of marketable grain.

The strength of large-scale farming, irrespective of whether it is landlord, kulak or collective farming, lies in the fact that large farms are able to employ machines, scientific methods, fertilisers, to increase the productivity of labour, and thus to produce the maximum quantity of marketable grain. On the other hand, the weakness of small-peasant farming lies in the fact that it lacks, or almost lacks, these opportunities, and as a result it is semi-consuming farming, yielding little marketable grain.

Take, for instance, the collective farms and the state farms. They market 47.2 per cent of their gross output of grain. In other words, they yield relatively more marketable grain than did landlord farming in pre-war days. But what about the small- and middle-peasant farms? They market only 11.2 per cent of their total output of grain. The difference, as you see, is quite striking.

Here are a few figures illustrating the structure of grain production in the past, in the pre-war period, and at present, in the post-October period. These figures were supplied by Comrade Nemchinov, a member of the Collegium of the Central Statistical Board. It is not claimed that these figures are exact, as Comrade Nemchinov explains in his memorandum; they permit of only approximate calculations. But they are quite adequate to enable us to understand the difference between the pre-war period and the post-October period as regards the structure of grain production in general, and the production of marketable grain in particular.

	Gross Grain Production		*Marketable Grain (i.e., not consumed in the countryside)*		
	Millions of poods	Per cent	Millions of poods	Per cent	Percentage of marketable grain
Pe-war					
1. Landlords	600	12.0	281.6	21.6	47.0
2. Kulaks	1,900	38.0	650.0	50.0	34.0
3. Middle and poor peasants	2,500	50.0	369.0	28.4	14.7
Total	5,000	100.0	1,300.6	100.0	26.0
Post-war (1926-27)					
1. State farms and collective farms	80.0	1.7	37.8	6.0	47.2
2. Kulaks	617.0	13.0	126.0	20.0	20.0
3. Middle and poor peasants	4,052.0	85.3	466.2	74.0	11.2
Total	4,749.0	100.0	630.0	100.0	13.3

What does this table show?

It shows, firstly, that the production of the overwhelming proportion of grain products has passed from the landlords and kulaks to the small and middle peasants. This means that the small and middle peasants, having completely emancipated themselves from the yoke of the landlords, and having, in the main, broken the strength of the kulaks, have thereby been enabled considerably to improve their material conditions. That is the result of the October Revolution. Here we see the effect, primarily, of the decisive gain which accrued to the main mass of the peasantry as a result of the October Revolution.

It shows, secondly, that in our country the principal holders of marketable grain are the small and, primarily, the middle peasants. This means that not only as regards gross production of grain, but also as regards the production of maketable grain, the U.S.S.R. has become, as a result of the October Revolution, a land of small-peasant farming, and the middle peasant has become the "central figure" in agriculture.

It shows, thirdly, that the abolition of landlord (large-scale) farming, the reduction of kulak (large-scale) farming to less than one-third, and the passing to small-peasant farming with only 11 per cent of its output marketed, in the absence, in the sphere of grain production, of any more or less developed large-scale socially-conducted farming (collective farms and state farms), were bound to lead, and in fact have led, to a sharp reduction in the production of marketable grain as compared with pre-war times. It is a fact that the amount of marketable grain in our country is now half what it was before the war, although the gross output of grain has reached the pre-war level.

That is the basis of our difficulties on the grain front.

That is why our difficulties in the sphere of grain procurements must not be regarded as a mere accident.

No doubt the situation has been aggravated to some extent by the fact that our trading organisations took upon themselves the unnecessary task of supplying grain to a number of small and middle-sized towns, and this was bound to reduce to a certain extent the state's grain reserves. But there are no grounds whatever for doubting that the basis of our difficulties on the grain front lies not in this particular circumstance, but in the slow development of the output of our argiculture for the market, accompanied by a rapid increase in the demand for marketable grain.

What is the way out of this situation?

Some people see the way out of this situation in a return to kulak farming, in the development and extension of kulak farming. These people dare not speak of a return to landlord farming, for they realise, evidently, that such talk is dangerous in our times. All the more eagerly, however, do they speak of the necessity of the utmost development of kulak farming in the interests of the Soviet regime. These people think that the Soviet regime can rely simultaneously on two opposite classes—the class of the kulkaks, whose economic principle is the exploitation of the working class, and the class of the workers, whose economic principle is the abolition of all exploitation. A trick worthy of reactionaries.

There is no need to prove that these reactionary "plans" have nothing in common with the interests of the working class, with the principles of Marxism, with the tasks of Leninism. Talk about the kulak being "no worse" than the urban capitalist, about the kulak being no more dangerous than the urban Nepman, and therefore, about there being no reason to "fear" the kulaks now—such talk is sheer liberal chatter which lulls the vigilance of the working class and of the main mass of the peasantry. It must not be forgotten that in industry we can oppose to the small urban capitalist our large-scale socialist industry, which produces nine-tenths of the total output of manufactured goods, whereas in the countryside we can oppose to large-scale kulak farming only the still weak collective farms and state farms, which produce but one-eighth of the amount of grain produced by the kulak farms. To fail to understand the significance of large-scale kulak farming in the countryside, to fail to understand that the relative importance of the kulaks in the countryside is a hundred times greater than that of the small capitalists in urban industry, is to lose one's senses, to break with Leninism, to desert to the side of the enemies of the working class.

What, then, is the way out of the situation?

1) The way out lies, above all, in passing from small, backward and scattered peasant farms to united, large socially-conducted farms, equipped with machinery, armed with scientific knowledge and capable of producing the maximum amount of marketable grain. The way out lies in the transition from individual peasant farming to collective, socially-conducted economy in agriculture.

Lenin called on the Party to organise collective farms from the very first days of the October Revolution. From that time onwards the propaganda of the idea of collective farming has not ceased in our Party. However, it is only recently that the call for the formation of collective farms has met with a mass response.

This is to be explained primarily by the fact that the widespread development of a co-operative communal life in the countryside paved the way for a radical change in the attitude of the peasants in favour of collective farms, while the existence of a number of collective farms already harvesting from 150 to 200 poods per dessiatin, of which from 30 to 40 per cent represents a marketable surplus, is strongly attracting the poor peasants and the lower strata of the middle peasants towards the collective farms.

Of no little importance in this connection is also the fact that only recently has it become possible for the state to lend substantial financial assistance to the collective-farm movement. We know that this year the state has granted twice the amount of money it did last year in aid of the collective farms (more than 60,000,000 rubles). The Fifteenth Party Congress was absolutely right in stating that the conditions have already ripened for a mass collective-farm movement and that the stimulation of the collective-farm movement is one of the most important means of increasing the proportion of marketable grain in the country's grain production.

According to the data of the Central Statistical Board, the gross production of grain by the collective farms in 1927 amounted to no less than 55,000,000 poods, with an average marketable surplus of 30 per cent. The widespread movement at the beginning of this year for the formation of new collective farms and for the expansion of the old ones should considerably increase the grain output of the collective farms by the end of the year. The task is to maintain the present rate of development of the collective-farm movement, to enlarge the collective farms, to get rid of sham collective farms, replacing them by genuine ones, and to establish a system whereby the collective farms will deliver to the state and co-operative organisations the whole of their marketable grain under penalty of being deprived of state subsidies and credits. I think that, if these conditions are adhered to, within three or four years we shall be able to obtain from the collective farms as much as 100,000,000 poods of marketable grain.

The collective-farm movement is sometimes contrasted with the co-operative movement, apparently on the assumption that collective farms are one thing, and co-operatives another. That, of course, is wrong. Some even go so far as to contrast collective farms with Lenin's co-operative plan. Needless to say, such contrasting has nothing in common with the truth. In actual fact, the collective farms are a form of co-operatives, the most striking form of producers' co-operatives. There are marketing co-operatives, there are supply co-operatives, and there are also producers' co-operatives. The collective farms are an inseparable and integral part of the co-operative movement in general, and of Lenin's co-operative plan in particular. To carry out Lenin's co-operative plan means to raise the peasantry from the level of marketing and supply co-operatives to the level of producers' co-operatives, of collective-farm co-operatives, so to speak. This, by the way, explains why our collective farms began to arise and develop only as a result of the development and consolidation of the marketing and supply co-operatives.

2) The way out lies, secondly, in expanding and strengthening the old state farms, and in organising and developing new, large ones. According to the data of the Central Statistical Board, the gross production of grain in the existing state farms amounted in 1927 to no less than 45,000,000 poods with a marketable surplus of 65 per cent. There is no doubt that, given a certain amount of state support, the state farms could considerably increase the production of grain.

But the task does not end there. There is a decision of the Soviet Government on the strength of which new large state farms (from 10,000 to 30,000 dessiatins each) are being organised in districts where there are no peasant holdings; and in five or six years these state farms should yield about 100,000,000 poods of marketable grain. The organisation of these state farms has already begun. The task is to put this decision of the Soviet Government into effect at all costs. I think that, provided these tasks are fulfilled, within three or four years we shall be able to obtain from the old and new state farms about 80,000,000-100,000,000 poods of grain for the market.

3) Finally, the way out lies in systematically increasing the yield of the individual small- and middle-peasant farms. We cannot and should not lend any support to the individual large kulak farms. But we can and should assist the individual small- and middle-peasant farms, helping them to increase their crop yields and drawing them into the channel of co-operative organ-

isation. This is an old task ; it was proclaimed with particular emphasis as early as 1921 when the tax in kind was substituted for the surplus-appropriation system. This task was reaffirmed by our Party at its Fourteenth[9] and Fifteenth Congresses. The importance of this task is now emphasised by the difficulties on the grain front. That is why this task must be fulfilled with the same persistence as the first two tasks will be, those concerning the collective farms and the state farms.

All the facts show that the yield of peasant farms can be increased by some 15 to 20 per cent in the course of a few years. At present no less than 5,000,000 wooden ploughs are in use in our country. Their replacement by modern ploughs alone would result in a very considerable increase in grain production in the country. This is apart from supplying the peasant farms with a certain minimum of fertilisers, selected seed, small machines, etc. The contract system, the system of signing contracts with whole villages for supplying them with seed, etc., on condition that in return they unfailingly deliver a certain quantity of grain products—this system is the best method of raising the yield of peasant farms and of drawing the peasants into the co-operatives. I think that if we work persistently in this direction we can, within three or four years, obtain additionally from the small and middle individual peasant farms not less than 100,000,000 poods of maketable grain.

Thus, if all these tasks are fulfilled, the state can in three or four years' time have at its disposal 250,000,000 to 300,000,000 additional poods of marketable grain—a supply more or less sufficient to enable us to manoeuvre properly within the country as well as abroad.

Such, in the main, are the measures which must be taken in order to solve the difficulties on the grain front.

Our task at present is to combine these basic measures with current measures to improve planning in the sphere of supplying the countryside with goods, relieving our trading organisations of the duty of supplying grain to a number of small and middle-sized towns.

Should not, in addition to these measures, a number of other measures be adopted—measures, say, to reduce the rate of development of our industry, the growth of which is causing a considerable increase in the demand for grain, which at present is outstripping the increase in the production of marketable grain? No, not under any circumstances! To reduce the rate of development of industry would mean to weaken the working class; for every step forward in the development of industry, every new factory, every new works, is, as Lenin expressed it, "a new stronghold" of the working class, one which strengthens the latter's position in the fight against the petty-bourgeois elemental forces, in the fight against the capitalist elements in our economy. On the contrary, we must maintain the present rate of development of industry; we must at the first opportunity speed it up in order to pour goods into the rural areas and obtain more grain from them, in order to supply agriculture, and primarily the collective farms and state farms, with machines, in order to industrialise agriculture and to increase the proportion of its output for the market.

Should we, perhaps, for the sake of greater "caution," retard the development of heavy industry so as to make light industry, which produces chiefly for the peasant market, the basis of our industry? Not under any circumstances! That would be suicidal; it would undermine our whole industry, including light industry. It would mean abandoning the slogan of industrialising our country, it would mean transforming our country into an appendage of the world capitalist system of economy.

In this respect we proceed from the well-known guiding principles which Lenin set forth at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern,[10] and which are absolutely binding for the whole of our Party. Here is what Lenin said on this subject at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern:

> "The salvation of Russia lies not only in a good harvest on the peasant farms—that is not enough; and not only in the good condition of light industry, which provides the peasantry with consumer goods—that, too, is not enough; we also need *heavy* industry."

Or again:

> "We are exercising economy in all things, even in schools. This must be so, because we know that unless we save heavy industry, unless we restore it, we shall not be able to build up any industry; and without that we shall be doomed as an independent country" (Vol. XXVII, p. 349).

These directives given by Lenin must never be forgotten.

How will the measures proposed affect the alliance between the workers and the peasants? I think that these measures can only help to strengthen the alliance between the workers and the peasants.

Indeed, if the collective farms and the state farms develop at increased speed : if, as a result of direct assistance given to the small and middle peasants, the yield of their farms increases and the co-operatives embrace wider and wider masses of the peasantry ; if the state obtains the hundreds of millions of poods of additional marketable grain required for manoeuvring ; if, as a result of these and similar measures, the kulkas are curbed and gradually overcome—is it not clear that the contradictions between the working class and the peasantry within the alliance of the workers and peasants will thereby be smoothed out more and more ; that the need for emergency measures in the procurement of grain will disappear ; that wide masses of the peasantry will turn more and more to collective forms of farming and that the fight to overcome the capitalist elements in the countryside will assume an increasingly mass and organised character ?

Is it not clear that the cause of the alliance between the workers and the peasants can only benefit by such measures ?

It must only be borne in mind that the alliance of the workers and peasants under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat should not be viewed as an ordinary alliance. It is a special form of class alliance between the working class and the labouring masses of the peasantry, which sets itself the object : a) of strengthening the position of the working class ; b) of ensuring the leading role of the working class within this alliance ; c) of abolishing classes and class society. Any other conception of the alliance of the workers and peasants is opportunism, Menshevism, S.-R.-ism—anything you like, but not Marxism, not Leninism.

How can the idea of the alliance of the workers and peasants be reconciled with Lenin's well-known thesis that the peasantry is "the last capitalist class" ? Is there not a contradiction here ? The contradiction is only an apparent, a seeming one. Actually there is no contradiction here at all. In that same speech at the Third Congress of the Comintern[11] in which Lenin characterised the peasantry as "the last capitalist class," he again and again substantiates the need for an alliance between the workers and the peasants, declaring that "the supreme principle of the dictatorship is the maintenance of the alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry in order that the proletariat may retain its leading role and state power." It is clear that Lenin, at any rate, saw no contradiction in this.

How are we to understand Lenin's thesis that the peasantry is "the last capitalist class"? Does it mean that the peasantry consists of capitalists? No, it does not.

It means, firstly, that the individual peasantry is a special class, which bases its economy on the private ownership of the instruments and means of production and which, for that reason, differs from the class of proletarians, who base their economy on collective ownership of the instruments and means of production.

It means, secondly, that the individual peasantry is a class which produces from its midst, engenders and nourishes, capitalists, kulaks and all kinds of exploiters in general.

Is not this circumstance an insuperable obstacle to the organisation of an alliance of the workers and peasants? No, it is not. The alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat should not be regarded as an alliance with the whole of the peasantry. The alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry is an alliance of the working class with the labouring masses of the peasantry. Such an allance cannot be effected without a struggle against the capitalist elements of the peasantry, against the kulaks. Such an alliance cannot be a stable one unless the poor peasants are organised as the bulwark of the working class in the countryside. That is why the alliance between the workers and the peasants under the present conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat can be effected only in accordance with Lenin's well-known slogan: Rely on the poor peasant, build a stable alliance with the middle peasant, never for a moment cease fighting against the kulaks. For only by applying this slogan can the main mass of the peasantry be drawn into the channel of socialist construction.

You see, therefore, that the contradiction between Lenin's two formulas is only an imaginary, a seeming contradiction. Actually, there is no contradiction between them at all.

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Lenin and the Question of the Alliance with the Middle Peasant

Reply to Comrade S.

Comrade S.,

It is not true that Lenin's slogan : "To come to an agreement with the middle peasant, while never for a moment renouncing the fight against the kulak, and firmly relying solely on the poor peasant," which he advanced in his well-known article on Pitirim Sorokin,[12] is, as is alleged, a slogan of the "period of the Poor Peasants' Committees," a slogan of "the end of the period of the so-called neutralisation of the middle peasantry." *That is absolutely untrue.*

The Poor Peasants' Committees were formed in June 1918. By the end of October 1918, our forces in the countryside had already gained the upper hand over the kulaks, and the middle peasants had *turned* to the side of the Soviet power. It was on the basis of this turn that the decision of the Central Committee was taken to abolish the dual power of the Soviets and the Poor Peasants' Committees, to hold new elections to the volost and village Soviets, to merge the Poor Peasants' Committees with the newly-elected Soviets and, consequently, to dissolve the Poor Peasants' Committees. This decision was formallly approved, as is well known, on November 9, 1918, by the Sixth Congress of Soviets. I have in mind the decision of the Sixth Congress of Soviets of November 9, 1918, on the village and volost Soviet elections and the merging of the Poor Peasants' Committees with the Soviets.

But when did Lenin's article, "Valuable Admissions of Pitirim Sorokin," appear, the article in which he proclaimed the slogan of agreement with the middle peasant in the place of the slogan of neutralising the middle peasant ? It appeared on November 24, 1918, i.e., nearly two weeks *after* the decision of the Sixth Congress of Soviets. In this article Lenin plainly says that the policy of agreement with the middle peasant is dictated by the *turn* to our side made by the middle peasant.

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* Slightly abridged.—*J. St.*

Here is what Lenin says:

> "Our task in the countryside is to destroy the landlord and smash the resistance of the exploiter and the kulak speculator. For this purpose we can rely firmly *only* on the semi-proletarians, the 'poor peasants.' But the middle peasant is not our enemy. He vacillated, is vacillating and will continue to vacillate. The task of influencing the vacillators *is not identical* with the task of overthrowing the exploiter and defeating the active enemy. The task at the present moment is to come to an agreement with the middle peasant, while never for a moment renouncing the fight against the kulak, and firmly relying solely on the poor peasant, for it is precisely now that *a turn in our direction on the part of the middle peasantry is inevitable,** owing to the causes above enumerated" (Vol. XXIII, p. 294).

What follows from this?

It follows from this that Lenin's slogan refers, not to the *old* period, not to the period of the Poor Peasants' Committees and the neutralisation of the middle peasant, but to the *new* period, the period of agreement with the middle peasant. Thus, it reflects, not the *end* of the old period, but the *beginning* of a new period.

But your assertion about Lenin's slogan is not only wrong from the formal point of view, not merely, so to speak, chrnologically; it is wrong in substance.

We know that Lenin's slogan regarding agreement with the middle peasant was proclaimed as a new slogan by the whole Party at the Eighth Party Congress (March 1919). We know that the Eighth Party Congress was the congress which laid the foundation of our policy of a stable alliance with the middle peasant. It is known that our programme, the programme of the C.P.S.U.(B.) was adopted also at the Eighth Congress of the Party. We know that that programme contains special points dealing with the Party's attitude towards the various groups in the countryside: the poor peasants, the middle peasants, and the kulaks. What do these points in the programme of the C.P.S.U.(B.) say regarding the social groups in the countryside and regarding our Party's attitude towards them? Listen:

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

"In all its work in the countryside the R.C.P., as hitherto, *relies on the proletarian and semi-proletarian strata of the rural population;* first and foremost it organises these strata into an independent force by establishing Party units in the villages, forming organisations of poor peasants, a special type of trade unions of proletarians and semi-proletarians in the countryside, and so forth, bringing them closer in every way to the urban proletariat and wresting them from the influence of the rural bourgeoisie and the small-proprietor interests.

"With respect to the kulaks, to the rural bourgeoisie, the policy of R.C.P. is *resolutely to combat their exploiting proclivities, to suppress their resistance to the Soviet policy.*

"With respect to the middle peasants, the policy of the R.C.P. is gradually and systematically to draw them into the work of socialist construction. The Party sets itself the task of separating them from the kulaks, of winning them to the side of the working class by carefully attending to their needs, of combating their backwardness by measures of ideological influence and not at all by measures of repression, and of striving in all cases where their vital interests are concerned to come *to practical agreements with them,* making concessions to them in determining the methods of carrying out socialist changes"* (*Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*, verbatim report, p. 351[13]).

Try to find the slightest difference even in words between these points of the programme and Lenin's slogan! You will not find any difference, for there is none. More than that. There cannot be any doubt that Lenin's slogan not only does not contradict the decisions of the Eighth Congress on the middle peasant, but, on the contrary, is a most apt and exact formulation of these decisions. And it is a fact that the programme of the C.P.S.U.(B.) was adopted in March 1919, at the Eighth Congress of the Party, which specially discussed the question of the middle peasant, while Lenin's article against Pitirim Sorokin, which proclaimed the slogan of agreement with the middle peasant, appeared in the press in November 1918, four months before the Eighth Congress of the Party.

Is it not clear that the Eighth Congress of the Party *fully and entirely confirmed* Lenin's slogan, proclaimed by him in his article against Pitirim Sorokin, as a slogan by which the Party must be *guided* in its work in the countryside *during the whole of the present period of socialist construction?*

What is the essential point of Lenin's slogan?

The essential point of Lenin's slogan is that it embraces with remarkable precision the *triune* task of Party work in the countryside, expressed in a single condensed formula: a) *rely* on the poor peasant: b) establish *agreement* with the middle peasant, and c) never for a moment cease *fighting* against the kulaks. Try to take from this formula any one of its parts as a basis for work in the countryside at the present time and forget about the other parts, and you will inevitably find yourself in a blind alley.

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* All italics mine.—*J. St.*

Is it possible in the present phase of socialist construction to reach a real and stable agreement with the middle peasant without relying on the poor peasant and without waging a fight against the kulak?

It is not possible.

Is it possible, under the present conditions of development, to wage a successful fight against the kulak without relying on the poor peasant and without reaching agreement with the middle peasant?

It is not possible.

How can this triune task of Party work in the countryside be most aptly expressed in one all-embracing slogan? I think that Lenin's slogan is the most apt expression of this task. It must be admitted that you cannot express it more aptly than Lenin...

Why is it necessary to emphasise the expediency of Lenin's slogan *just now,* precisely *under the present conditions* of work in the countryside?

Because just now we see a tendency among certain comrades to break up this *triune* task of Party work in the countryside into parts and to sever these parts from one another. This is fully borne out by the experience of our grain procurement campaign in January and February of this year.

Every Bolshevik knows that agreement must be reached with the middle peasant. But not everybody understands how this agreement is to be reached. Some think that agreement with the middle peasant can be brought about by abandoning the fight against the kulak, or by slackening this fight; because, they say, the fight against the kulak may frighten away a section of the middle peasantry, its well-to-do section.

Others think that agreement with the middle peasant can be brought about by abandoning the work of organising the poor peasants, or by slackening this work; because, they say, the organisation of the poor peasants means singling out the poor peasants, and this may frighten the middle peasants away from us.

The result of these deviations from the correct line is that such people forget the Marxist thesis that the middle peasantry is a vacillating class, that agreement with the middle peasants can be rendered stable only if a determined fight is carried on against the kulaks and if the work among the poor peasants is intensified; that unless these conditions are adhered to, the middle peasantry may swing to the side of the kulaks, as to a force.

Remember what Lenin said at the Eighth Party Congress:

> "We have to determine our attitude to a class which *has no definite and stable position.** The proletariat in its mass is in favour of socialism, the bourgeoisie in its mass is opposed to socialism; to determine the relation between these two classes is easy. But when we pass to a stratum like the middle peasantry we find that *it is a class that vacillates.* The middle peasant is partly a property owner, partly a toiler. He does not exploit other representatives of the toilers. For decades he had to defend his position under the greatest difficulties; he suffered the exploitation of the landlords and the capitalists; he bore everything and yet at the same time he is a property owner. Our attitude to this vacillating class therefore presents enormous difficulties" (*Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*, verbatim report, p. 300[14]).

But there are other deviations from the correct line, no less dangerous than those already mentioned. In some cases the fight against the kulak is indeed carried on, but it is carried on in such a clumsy and senseless manner that the blows fall on the middle and poor peasants. As a result, the kulak escapes unscathed, a rift is made in the alliance with the middle peasant, and a section of the poor peasants temporarily falls into the clutches of the kulak, who is fighting to undermine Soviet policy.

It other cases attempts are made to transform the fight against the kulaks into dekulakisation, and the work of grain procurement into appropriation of surpluses, forgetting that under present conditions dekulakisation is folly and the surplus-appropriation system means not an alliance with, but a fight against, the middle peasant.

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

What is the source of these deviations from the Party line?

The source lies in failure to understand that the triple task of Party work in the countryside is a *single* and *indivisible* task; in failure to understand that the task of fighting the kulak *cannot be separated* from the task of reaching agreement with the middle peasant, and that these two tasks cannot be separated from the task of converting the poor peasant into a bulwark of the Party in the countryside.*

What must be done to ensure that these tasks are not separated from one another in the course of our current work in the countryside?

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* From this it follows that deviations from the correct line create a twofold danger to the alliance of the workers and peasants: a danger from the side of those who want, for instance, to transform the temporary emergency measures for grain procurement into a permanent or long-term policy of the Party; and a danger from the side of those who want to take advantage of the discontinuance of emergency measures in order to give the kulak a free hand, to proclaim complete freedom of trade, without any regulation of trade by state bodies. Hence, in order to ensure that the correct line is pursued the fight must be waged on two fronts.

I take this opportunity to observe that our press does not always follow this rule and sometimes displays a certain one-sidedness. In some cases, for instance, the press exposes those who want to transform the emergency measures for grain procurement which are of a temporary character, into a permanent line of our policy and who thus endanger the bond with the peasants. That is very good. But it is bad and wrong if at the same time our press fails to pay sufficient attention to and properly expose those who endanger the bond from the other side, who succumb to the petty-bourgeois elemental forces, demand a slackening of the fight against the capitalist elements in the countryside and the establishment of complete freedom of trade, trade not regulated by the state, and thus undermine the bond with the peasants from the other end. That is bad. That is one-sidedness.

It also happens that the press exposes those who, for instance, deny the possibility and expediency of improving the individual small- and middle-peasant farms, which at the present stage are the basis of agriculture. That is very good. But it is bad and wrong if at the same time the press does not expose those who belittle the importance of the collective farms and the state farms and who fail to see that the task of improving individual small- and middle-peasast farms must be supplemented in practice by the task of expanding the construction of collective and state farms. That is one-sidedness.

In order to ensure that the correct line is pursued, the fight must be waged *on two fronts,* and all one-sidedness must be rejected.

We must, at least, issue a guiding slogan that will combine all these tasks in one general formula and, consequently, prevent these tasks from being separated from one another.

Is there such a formula, such a slogan in our Party arsenal?

Yes, there is. That formula is Lenin's slogan: "To come to an agreement with the middle peasant, while never for a moment renouncing the fight against the kulak, and firmly relying solely on the poor peasant."

That is why I think that this slogan is the most expedient and all-embracing slogan, that it must be brought to the forefront *just now, precisely under the present conditions* of our work in the countryside.

You regard Lenin's slogan as an "oppositionist" slogan and in your letter you ask: *"How is it that. . . .this oppositionist slogan was printed in Pravda for May 1, 1928. . . .how can the fact be explained that this slogan appeared on the pages of Pravda, the organ of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.—is this merely a technical oversight, or is it a compromise with the opposition on the question of the middle peasant?"*

That is very strongly put—there's no denying! But "watch your step," Comrale S.; otherwise you may, in your zeal, arrive at the conclusion that we must *prohibit* the printing of our programme which fully confirms Lenin's slogan (this is a fact!), and which in the main was drawn up by Lenin (who was certainly not an oppositionist!), and which was adopted by the Eighth Congress of the Party (also not oppositionist!). Have more respect for the well-known points in our programme on the social groups in the countryside! Have more respect for the decisions of the Eighth Party Congress on the middle peasantry! . . . .

As for your phrase "a compromise with the opposition on the question of the middle peasant," I do not think it is worth refuting it; no doubt you wrote it in the heat of the moment.

You seem to be disturbed by the fact that both Lenin's slogan and the Programme of the C.P.S.U.(B.) adopted by the Eighth Congress of the Party speak of *agreement* with the middle peasant, whereas in his speech in opening the Eighth Congress Lenin spoke of *a stable alliance* with the middle peasant. Evidently, you think there is something in the nature of a contradiction in this. Perhaps you are even inclined to believe that the policy of *agreement* with the middle peasant is something in the nature of a departure from the policy of *alliance* with the middle peasant. That is wrong, Comrade S. That is a serious misconception. Only those who are able to read the letter of a slogan, but are unable to grasp its meaning, can think like that. Only those who are ignorant of the history of the slogan of alliance, of agreement with the middle peasant, can think like that. Only those can think like that who are capable of believing that Lenin, who in his opening speech at the Eighth Congress spoke about the policy of a "stable alliance" with the middle peasant, *departed* from his own position by saying in another speech *at the same* congress, and in the Party programme adopted by the Eighth Congress, that we now need a policy of "agreement" with the middle peasant.

What is the point then? The point is that both Lenin and the Party, in the shape of the Eighth Congress, make *no distinction whatever* between the concept "agreement" and the concept 'alliance." The point is that everywhere, in all his speeches at the Eighth Congress, Lenin places *a sign of equality* between the concept "alliance" and the concept "agreement." The same must be said about the resolution of the Eighth Congress, "The Attitude to the Middle Peasantry," in which *a sign of equality* is placed between the concept "agreement" and the concept "alliance." And since Lenin and the Party regard the policy of agreement with the middle peasant not as a casual and transient one, but as a *long-term* policy, they had, and have, every reason to call the policy of agreement with the middle peasant a policy of stable alliance with him and, conversely, to call the policy of stable alliance with the middle peasant a policy of agreement with him. One has only to read the verbatim report of the Eighth Congress of the Party and the resolution of that congress on the middle peasant to be convinced of this.

Here is an excerpt from Lenin's speech at the Eighth Congress:

> "Owing to the inexperience of Soviet officials and to the difficulties of the problem, the blows which were intended for the kulaks very frequently fell on the middle peasantry. Here we have sinned exceedingly. The experience we have gained in this respect will enable us to do everything to avoid this in the future. That is the task now facing us, not theoretically, but practically. You know very well that this task is a difficult

> one. We have no material advantages to offer the middle peasant; and he is a materialist, a practical man who demands definite, material advantages, which we are not now in a position to offer and which the country will have to do without, perhaps, for several months yet of severe struggle—a struggle which now promises to end in complete victory. But there is a great deal we can do in our administrative work: we can improve our administrative apparatus and correct a host of abuses. The line of our Party, which has not done enough towards arriving at *a bloc, an alliance, an agreement** with the middle peasantry, can and must be straightened out and corrected" (*Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*, verbatim report, p. 20[15]).

As you see, Lenin makes no distinction between "agreement" and "alliance."

And here are excerpts from the resolution of the Eighth Congress, "The Attitude to the Middle Peasantry."

> "To confuse the middle peasants with the kulaks, to extend to them, to any degree, the measures that are directed against the kulaks, means most grossly to violate, not only all Soviet decrees and all Soviet policy, but also all the fundamental principles of communism, which point to *agreement* between the proletariat and the middle peasantry during the period of the resolute struggle of the proletariat for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie as one of the conditions for the painless transition to the abolition of all forms of exploitation.
>
> "The middle peasantry, which possesses comparatively strong economic roots owing to the backwardness of agricultural technique, compared with industrial technique, even in the advanced capitalist countries, let alone Russia, will continue to exist for a fairly long time after the beginning of the proletarian revolution. That is why the tactics of Soviet officials in the countryside, as well as of active Party workers, must be based on the assumption of a *long period of collaboration* with the middle peasantry....
>
> "...An absolutely correct policy pursued by the Soviet Government in the countryside thus ensures *alliance and agreement* between the victorious proletariat and the middle peasantry....
>
> "...The policy of the workers' and peasants' government and of the Communist Party must continue to be conducted in this *spirit of agreement* between the proletariat, together with the poor peasantry, and the middle peasantry"* (*Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*, verbatim report, pp. 370-72[16]).

As you see, the resolution also makes no distinction between "agreement" and "alliance."

It will not be superfluous to observe that there is not a single word in this resolution of the Eighth Congress about a "stable alliance" with the middle peasant. Does that mean, however, that the resolution thereby *departs* from the policy of a "stable alliance" with the middle peasant? No, it does not. It only means that the resolution places a sign of equality between the concept "agreement," "collaboration," and the concept "stable alliance." For it is clear: there cannot be an "alliance" with the middle peasant without an "agreement" with him, and the alliance with the middle peasant cannot be "stable" unless there is a "long period" of agreement and collaboration with him.

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* All italics mine.—*J. St.*

Such are the facts.

Either one or the other: *either* Lenin and the Eighth Congress of the Party *departed* from Lenin's statement about a "stable alliance" with the middle peasant, *or* this frivolous assumption must be abandoned and it must be admitted that Lenin and the Eighth Congress of the Party made *no* distinction *whatever* between the concept "agreement" and the concept "stable alliance."

Thus, one who refuses to be a victim of idle pedantry, one who desires to grasp the true meaning of Lenin's slogan, which speaks of relying on the poor peasantry, of agreement with the middle peasantry and of fighting the kulaks, cannot fail to understand that the policy of *agreement* with the middle peasant is a policy of *stable alliance* with him.

Your mistake is that you have failed to understand the fraudulent trick of the opposition and have fallen a prey to their provocation; you walked into the trap the enemy set for you. The oppositionist swindlers noisily assure us that they are in favour of Lenin's slogan of agreement with the middle peasant, but at the same time they drop the provocatory hint that "agreement" with the middle peasant is one thing and a "stable alliance" with him is something different. In this way they want to kill two birds with one stone: firstly, to conceal their real attitude to the middle peasantry, which is not one of agreement with the middle peansant, but of *"dissension* with the middle peasant" (see the well-known speech of the oppositionist Smirnov, which I quoted at the Sixteenth Moscow Gubernia Party Conference[17]); and, secondly, to catch the simpletons among the Bolsheviks with the *alleged* difference between "agreement" and "alliance," and muddle them up completely, by driving them away from Lenin.

And how do certain of our comrades react to this ? Instead of tearing the mask from the oppositionist tricksters, instead of convicting them of deceiving the Party about their true position, they swallow the bait, walk into the trap, and allow themselves to be driven away from Lenin. The opposition is making a lot of noise about Lenin's slogan ; the oppositionists are posing as adherents of Lenin's slogan ; therefore, I must dissociate myself from this slogan, otherwise I may be confused with the opposition, otherwise I may be accused of "compromising with the opposition"—such is the logic of these comrades !

And this is not the only instance of the fraudulent tricks played by the opposition. Take, for instance, the slogan of self-criticism. Bolsheviks cannot but know that the slogan of self-criticism is one of the foundations of our Party activities : it is a means of strengthening the proletarian dictatorship, the soul of the Bolshevik method of training cadres. The opposition makes a lot of noise, asserting that it, the opposition, invented the slogan of self-criticism, that the Party stole this slogan from it, and thereby capitulated to the opposition. By acting in this way the opposition is trying to gain at least two ends :

firstly, to deceive the working class and to conceal from it the fact that an abyss divides the opposition's "self-criticism," the purpose of which is to *destroy* the Party spirit, from Bolshevik self-criticism, the purpose of which is to *strengthen* the Party spirit ;

secondly, to catch certain simpletons and to induce them to dissociate themselves from the Party slogan of self-criticism.

And how do some of our comrades react to this ? Instead of tearing the mask from the oppositionist tricksters and upholding the slogan of Bolshevik self-criticism, they walk into the trap, dissociate themselves from the slogan of self-criticism, dance to the tune of the opposition and . . . capitulate to it, in the mistaken belief that they are dissociating themselves from the opposition.

A host of such instances could be quoted.

But in our work we cannot dance to anybody's tune. Still less can we be guided in our work by what the oppositionists say about us. We must pursue our own path, brushing aside both the fraudulent tricks of the opposition and the errors of certain of our Bolsheviks who fall victims to the provocation of the oppositionists. Remember the words quoted by Marx : "Follow your own course, and let people talk !"[18]

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Signed : *J. Stalin*

Industrialisation and the Grain Problem

Speech Delivered on July 9, 1928

Comrades, before I pass to the specific question of our difficulties on the grain front, allow me to deal with some general questions of theoretical interest which arose here during the discussion at the plenum.

First of all, the general question *of the chief sources of development of our industry,* the means of guaranteeing our present rate of industrialisation.

Ossinsky and then Sokolnikov touched upon this question, perhaps without themselves realising it. It is a question of paramount importance.

I think that there are two chief sources nourishing our industry : firstly, the working class ; secondly, the peasantry.

In the capitalist countries industrialisation was usually effected, in the main, by robbing other countries, by robbing colonies or defeated countries, or with the help of substantial and more or less enslaving loans from abroad.

You know that for hundreds of years British collected capital from all her colonies and from all parts of the world, and was able in this way to make additional investments in her industry. This, incidentally, explains why Britain at one time became the "workshop of the world."

You know also that Germany developed her industry with the help, among other things, of the 5,000 million francs she levied as an indemnity on France after the Franco-Prussian war.

One respect in which our country differs from the capitalist countries is that it cannot and must not engage in colonial robbery, or the plundering of other countries in general. That way, therefore, is closed to us.

Neither, however, does our country have or want to have enslaving loans from abroad. Consequently, that way, too, is closed to us.

What then remains ? Only one thing, and that is to develop industry, to industrialise the country with the help of *internal* accumulations.

Under the bourgeois system in our country, industry, transport, etc., were usually developed with the help of loans. Whether you take the building of new factories or the re-equipment of old ones, whether you take the laying of new railways or the erection of big electric power stations—not one of these undertakings was able to dispense with foreign loans. But they were enslaving loans.

Quite different is the situation in our country under the Soviet system. We are building the Turkestan Railway, with a length of 1,400 versts, which requires hundreds of millions of rubles. We are erecting the Dineper Hydro-Electric Power Station, which also requires hundreds of millions of rubles. But have they involved us in any enslaving loans? No, they have not. All this is being done with the help of internal accumulation.

But what are the chief sources of these accumulations? As I have said, there are two such sources: firstly, the working class, which creates values and advances our industry; secondly, the peasantry.

The way matters stand with the peasantry in this respect is as follows: it not only pays the state the usual taxes, direct and indirect; it also *overpays* in the relatively high prices for manufactured goods—that is in the first place, and it is more or less *underpaid* in the prices for agricultural produce—that is in the second place.

This is an additional tax levied on the peasantry for the sake of promoting industry, which caters for the whole country, the peasantry included. It is something in the nature of a "tribute," of a supertax, which we are compelled to levy for the time being in order to preserve and accelerate our present rate of industrial development, in order to ensure an industry for the whole country, in order to raise further the standard of life of the rural population and then to abolish altogether this additional tax, these "scissors" between town and country.

It is an unpalatable business, there is no denying. But we should not be Bolsheviks if we slurred over it and closed our eyes to the fact that, unfortunately, our industry and our country cannot *at present* dispense with this additional tax on the peasantry.

Why do I speak of this ? Because some comrades, apparently, do not understand this indisputable truth. They based their speeches on the fact that the peasants are overpaying for manufactured goods, which is absolutely true, and are being underpaid for agricultural produce, which is also true. But what do they demand ? They demand the establishment of replacement prices for grain, so that these "scissors," these underpayments and overpayments, would be done away with *at once*. But what would be the effect of doing away with the "scissors" this year or next year, say ? The effect would be to retard the industrialisation of the country, including the industrialisation of agriculture, to undermine our young industry which is not yet firmly on its feet, and thus to strike at our entire national economy. Can we agree to this ? Obviously, we cannot. Should the "scissors" between town and country, should all these underpayments and overpayments be done away with ? Yes, they certainly should. Can we do away with them at once without weakening our industry, and hence our national economy ? No, we cannot.

What, then, should our policy be ? It should be gradually to close the "scissors," to diminish the gap from year to year, by lowering the prices for manufactured goods and improving agricultural technique—which cannot but result in reducing the cost of producing grain—and then, within the space of number of years, to do away completely with this additional tax on the peasantry.

Are the peasants capable of bearing this burden ? They undoubtedly are : firstly, because this burden will grow lighter from year to year, and, secondly, because this additional tax is being levied not under conditions of capitalist development, where the masses of the peasantry are condemned to poverty and exploitation, but under Soviet conditions, where exploitation of the peasants by the socialist state is out of the question, and where this additional tax is being paid in a situation in which the living standards of the peasantry are steadily rising.

That is how matters stand with regard to the basic sources of the industrialisation of our country at the present time.

The second question concerns the problem of the *bond with the middle peasant*—the problem of the aims of the bond and the means for effecting it.

It would follow from what some comrades say that the bond between town and country, between the working class and the main mass of the peasantry, is based *exclusively* on textiles, on satisfying the *personal* requirements of the peasantry. Is this true ? It is quite untrue, comrades. Of course, it is of immense importance to satisfy the peasants' personal requirements for textiles. That is how we began to establish the bond with the peasantry in the new conditions. But to assert on these grounds that the bond based on textiles is the beginning and end of the matter, that the bond based on satisfying the peasants' personal requirements is the all-inclusive or chief foundation of the economic alliance between the working class and the peasantry, is to commit a most serious error. Actually, the bond between town and country is based not only on satisfying the peasants' *personal* requirements, not only on textiles, but also on satisfying the *economic* requirements of the peasants as *producers* of agricultural products.

It is not only cotton fabrics that we give the peasants. We also give them machines of all kinds, seeds, ploughs, fertilisers, etc., which are of the weightiest importance for the advancement and socialist transformation of peasant farming.

Hence, the bond is based not only on textiles, but also on metals. Without this, the bond with the peasantry would be insecure.

In what way does the bond based on textile differ from the bond based on metals ? Primarily in the fact that the bond based on textiles chiefly concerns the peasants' personal requirements, without affecting, or affecting to a comparatively small extent, the production side of peasant farming, whereas the bond based on metals chiefly concerns the production side of peasant farming, improving it, mechanising it, making it more remunerative and paving the way for uniting the scattered and small peasant farms into large socially-conducted farms.

It would be a mistake to think that the purpose of the bond is to preserve classes, the peasant class in particular. That is not so, comrades. That is not the purpose of the bond at all. The purpose of the bond is to bring the peasantry closer to the working class, the leader of our entire development, to strengthen the alliance of the peasantry with the working class, the leading force in the alliance, gradually to *remould* the peasantry, its mentality and its production, *along collectivist lines*, and thus to bring about the conditions for the abolition of classes.

The purpose of the bond is not to preserve classes, but to abolish them. Whereas the bond based on textiles affects the production side of peasant farming very little and therefore, generally speaking, cannot result in the remoulding of the peasantry along collectivist lines and in the abolition of classes, the bond based upon metals, on the contrary, affects primarily the production side of peasant farming, its mechanisation and its collectivisation, and for this very reason should result in the gradual remoulding of the peasantry, in the gradual elimination of classes, including the peasant class.

How, in general, can the peasant—his mentality, his production—be remoulded, remade, along the lines of bringing his mentality closer to that of the working class, along the lines of the socialist principle of production ? What does this require ?

It requires, firstly, the widest agitation on behalf of collectivism among the peasant masses.

It requires, secondly, implanting a co-operative communal life and the ever wider extension of our co-operative supply and marketing organisations to the millions of peasant farms. There can be no doubt that had it not been for the broad development of our co-operatives, we should not have that swing towards the collective-farm movement that we observe among the peasants at the present time, for the development of supply and marketing co-operatives is in our conditions a means of preparing the peasants for going over to collective farming.

But all this is still far from enough to remould the peasantry. The principal force for remoulding the peasantry along socialist lines lies in new technical means in agriculture, the mechanisation of agriculture, collective peasant labour, and the electrification of the country.

Lenin has been referred to here, and a passage on the bond with peasant farming has been quoted from his works. But to take Lenin in part, without desiring to take him as a whole, is to misrepresent Lenin. Lenin was fully aware that the bond with the peasantry based on textile goods is a very important matter. But he did not stop there, for, side by side with this, he insisted that the bond with the peasantry should be based also on metals, on supplying the peasant with machines, on the electrification of the country, that is, on all those things which promote the remaking and remoulding of peasant *farming* on collectivist lines.

Please listen, for example, to the following quotation from Lenin :

> "The remaking of the small tiller, the remoulding of his whole mentality and habits, is a work of generations. As regards the small tiller, this problem can be solved, his whole mentality can be put on healthy lines, so to speak, only by the material base, by technical means, by introducing tractors and machines in agriculture on a mass scale, by electrification on a mass scale. That is what would remake the small tiller fundamentally and with immense rapidity" (Vol. XXVI, p. 239).

Quite clearly, the alliance between the working class and the peasantry cannot be stable and lasting, the bond cannot be stable and lasting and cannot attain its purpose of gradually remoulding the peasantry, bringing it closer to the working class and putting it on collectivist lines, if the bond based on textiles is not supplemented by the bond based on metals.

That is how Comrade Lenin understood the bond.

The third question is that of *the New Economic Policy (NEP) and the class struggle under NEP conditions.*

It is necessary first of all to establish the point that the principles of NEP were laid down by our Party not after war communism, as certain comrades sometimes assert, but before it, already at the beginning of 1918, when we were able for the first time to set about building a new, socialist economy. I could refer to Ilyich's pamphlet, *The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Power,* published in the beginning of 1918, where the principles of NEP are set forth. When the intervention ended and the Party introduced NEP, it described it as a new economic policy because this policy had been interrupted by the intervention and we were in a position to apply it only after the intervention, after war communism, compared with which NEP really was a new economic policy. In confirmaton of this, I consider it necessary to refer to the resolution of the Ninth Congress of Soviets, where it is stated in black and white that the principles of the New Economic Policy were laid down before war communism. This resolution, "Preliminary Results of the New Economic Policy," says the following :

> "What is known as the New Economic Policy, the basic principles of which were precisely defined *already at the time of the first respite, in*

> *the spring of 1918,** is based on a strict evaluation of the economic resources of Soviet Russia. The implementation of this policy, which was interrupted by the combined attack of the counter-revolutionary forces of the Russian landlords and bourgeoisie and European imperialism on the workers' and peasants' state, became possible only after the armed suppression of the counter-revolutionary attempts, at the beginning of 1921" (see *Resolutions of the Ninth All-Russian Congress of Soviets,* p. 16[19]).

You will thus see how mistaken is the assertion of some comrades that it was only after war communism that the Party realised the necessity for building socialism in the conditions of a market and a money economy, that is, in the conditons of the New Economic Policy.

And what follows from this ?

It follows, first of all, that NEP cannot be regarded as only a retreat.

It follows, further, that NEP presumes a victorious and systematic socialist offensive on the capitalist elements in our economy.

The opposition, in the shape of Trotsky, thinks that once NEP has been introduced, only one thing remains for us to do, and that is to retreat step by step, as we retreated at the beginning of NEP, "extending" NEP and surrendering positions. It is on this incorrect conception of NEP that Trotsky bases his assertion that the Party "extended" NEP and retreated from Lenin's position by permitting the renting of land and the hiring of labour in the countryside. Please listen to Trotsky's words :

> "But what is the significance of the Soviet Government's latest measures in the countryside—sanctioning the renting of land and the hiring of labour—all that which we call *extending* rural NEP. . . . But could we have *abstained from extending* NEP in the countryside ? No, because then peasant farming would have fallen into decay, the market would have narrowed, and industry would have been retarded" (Trotsky, *Eight Years*, pp. 16-17).

That is the length to which one may go if one gets into one's head the mistaken notion that NEP is a retreat and nothing but a retreat.

Can it be asserted that, in permitting the hiring of labour and the renting of land in the countryside, the Party "extended"

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

NEP, "retreated" from Lenin's position and so on? Of course not! People who talk such nonsense have nothing in common with Lenin and Leninism.

I might refer to Lenin's letter to Ossinsky of April 1, 1922, where he speaks explicitly of the necessity of permitting the hiring of labour and the renting of land in the countryside. That was towards the end of the Eleventh Party Congress, where the question of work in the countryside, of NEP and its consequences had been widely discussed by the delegates.

Here is a quotation from this letter, forming the draft of a resolution for the delegates at the Party congress:

> "On the question of the conditions for permitting the hiring of labour in agriculture and the renting of land, the Party Congress recommends all functionaries engaged in this field not to hamper either of these trends with excessive formalities, and to confine themselves to carrying out the decision of the last congress of Soviets, and also to studying what practical measures would be expedient in order to restrict the possibility of extremes and harmful excesses in this matter" (see *Lenin Miscellany*, IV, p. 396[20]).

You see how foolish and baseless is the talk about an "extension" of NEP, about a "retreat" from Lenin's position in connection with the introduction of the renting of land and the hiring of labour in the countryside, etc.

Why do I speak of this?

Because the people who are talking about an "extension" of NEP are seeking to use this talk as a justification for retreating in face of the capitalist elements in the countryside.

Because people have arisen inside and around our Party who see in the "extension" of NEP a means of "saving" the bond between the workers and the peasants, people who, on the grounds of the repeal of the emergency measures, demand that the restrictions on the kulaks be discarded, and who demand that the capitalist elements in the countryside be given a free hand—in the interests of the bond.

Because the Party must be safeguarded against these anti-proletarian sentiments by all ways and means in our power.

Not to go too far afield, I shall refer to a note from a comrade, Osip Chernov, a member of the staff of *Bednota*,[21] in which he demands a series of relaxations for the kulaks, relaxations which would be nothing but a real and undisguised "extension" of NEP. I do not know whether he is a Communist or not. But this comrade, Osip Chernov, who is a supporter of the Soviet regime and of the alliance between the workers and the peasants, is so muddled over the peasant question that it is difficult to distinguish him from an ideologist of the rural bourgeoisie. What, in his opinion, are the reasons for our difficulties on the grain front? "The first reason," he says, "is unquestionably the progressive income tax system. . . . The second reason is the legal changes in the election regulations, the lack of clarity in the regulations as to who is to be regarded as a kulak."

What must be done to remove the difficulties? "It is necessary in the first place," he says, "*to abolish the progressive income tax system* as it now stands, and replace it by a land texation system, and to put a light tax on draught animals and major agricultural implements. . . . A second, and no less important, measure is to *revise the election regulations,* so as to make more prominent the signs showing where an exploiting, kulak farm begins."

There you have the "extension" of NEP. As you see, the seed cast by Trotsky has not fallen on barren soil. Incorrect understanding of NEP gives rise to talk about "extension" of NEP, and talk about "extension" of NEP results in all sorts of notes, articles, letters and proposals recommending that the kulak should be allowed a free hand, that he should be relieved of restrictions and enabled to enrich himself without hindrance.

In reference to this same question, the question of NEP and the class struggle under NEP conditions, I should like to mention another fact. I am referring to the statement made by one of the comrades to the effect that, in connection with the grain procurements, the class struggle under NEP is only of minor importance, that this class struggle is not and cannot be of any serious importance in our grain procurement difficulties.

I must say, comrades, that I cannot at all agree with this statement. I think that, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, there is not and cannot be a single political or economic fact of any importance which does not reflect the existence of a class struggle in town or country. Does NEP abolish the dictatorship of the proletariat? Of course not! On the contrary, NEP is a specific form of expression and an instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And is not the dictatorship of the proletariat a continuation of the class struggle? (*Voices: "True!"*) How, then, can it be that the class struggle plays only a minor role in such important political and economic facts as the kulaks' attack on Soviet policy at the time of the grain procurements and the counter-measures and offensive actions undertaken by the Soviet Government against the kulaks and speculators in connection with the grain procurements?

Is it not a fact that at the time of the grain procurement crisis we had the first serious attack by the capitalist elements of the countryside on Soviet policy under NEP conditions?

Have classes and the class struggle ceased to exist in the countryside?

Is it not true that Lenin's slogan about *relying* on the poor peasant, an *alliance* with the middle peasant and *fighting* against the kulaks is the basic slogan of our work in the countryside under the present conditions? And what is this slogan if not an expression of the class struggle in the countryside?

Of course, our policy must by no means be regarded as a policy of fanning the class struggle. Why? Because fanning the class struggle would lead to civil war. Because, inasmuch as we are in power, and inasmuch as we have consolidated our power and the key positions are in the hands of the working class, it is not in our interest that the class struggle should assume the forms of civil war. But this in no way implies that the class struggle has been abolished, or that it will not grow sharper. Still less does it imply that the class struggle is not the decisive factor in our advancement. No, it does not.

We often say that we are promoting socialist forms of economy in the sphere of trade. But what does that imply? It implies that we are squeezing out of trade thousands upon thousands of small and medium traders. Is it to be expected that these traders who have been squeezed out of the sphere of trade will keep silent and not attempt to organise resistance? Obviously not.

We often say that we are promoting socialist forms of economy in the sphere of industry. But what does that imply? It implies that, by our advance towards socialism, we are squeezing out and ruining, perhaps without ourselves noticing it, thousands upon thousands of small and medium capitalist manufacturers. Is it to be expected that these ruined people will keep silent and not attempt to organise resistance? Of course not.

We often say that it is necessary to restrict the exploiting proclivities of the kulaks in the countryside, that they must be heavily taxed and the right to rent land limited, that kulaks must not be allowed the right to vote in the election of Soviets, and so on and so forth. But what does that imply? It implies that we are gradually pressing upon and squeezing out the capitalist elements in the countryside, sometimes driving them to ruin. Is it to be presumed that the kulaks will be grateful to us for this and will not endeavour to organise part of the poor peasants or middle peasants against the Soviet Government's policy? Of course not.

Is it not obvious that our whole forward movement, our every success of any importance in the sphere of socialist construction, is an expression and result of the class struggle in our country?

But it follows from all this that the more we advance, the greater will be the resistance of the capitalist elements and the sharper the class struggle, while the Soviet Government, whose strength will steadily increase, will pursue a policy of isolating these elements, a policy of demoralising the enemies of the working class, a policy, lastly, of crushing the resistance of the exploiters, thereby creating a basis for the further advance of the working class and the main mass of the peasantry.

It must not be imagined that the socialist forms will develop, squeezing out the enemies of the working class, while our enemies retreat in silence and make way for our advance, that then we shall again advance and they will again retreat until 'unexpectedly" all the social groups without exception, both kulaks and poor peasants, both workers and capitalists, find themselves "suddenly" and "imperceptibly," without struggle or commotion, in the lap of a socialist society. Such fairy-tales do not and cannot happen in general, and in the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular.

It never has been and never will be the case that a dying class surrenders its positions voluntarily without attempting to organise resistance. It never has been and never will be the case that the working class could advance towards socialism in a class society without struggle or commotion. On the contrary, the advance towards socialism cannot but cause the exploiting elements to resist the advance, and the resistance of the exploiters cannot but lead to the inevitable sharpening of the class struggle.

That is why the working class must not be lulled with talk about the class struggle playing a secondary role.

The fourth question concerns the problem of *emergency measures* against the kulaks and speculators.

Emergency measures must not be regarded as something absolute and established once for all. Emergency measures are necessary and expedient in definite, emergency circumstances, when no other means of manoeuvring are available. Emergency measures are unnecessary and harmful in other circumstances, when other, flexible means of manoeuvring in the market are available. Those who think that emergency measures are a bad thing in all circumstances are mistaken. A systematic struggle must be waged against such people. But mistaken, too, are those who think that emergency measures are necessary and expedient at all times. A resolute struggle against such people is essential.

Was it a mistake to resort to emergency measures in the conditions of the grain procurement crisis? It is now recognised by all that it was not a mistake, that, on the contrary, the emergency measures saved the country from a crisis of our whole economy. What induced us to resort to these measures? The deficit of 128,000,000 poods of grain by January of this year, which we had to make good before the roads were spoiled by the spring thaws, at the same time ensuring a normal rate of grain procurement. Could we refrain from resorting to emergency measures in the absence of a reserve of about 100,000,000 poods of grain essential for being able to hold out and to intervene in the market with the object of reducing grain prices, or in the absence of an adequate reserve of foreign currency essential for importing large quantities of grain from abroad? Obviously, we could not. And what whould have happened if we had not made good this deficit? We should now be having a most serious crisis of our entire national economy, hunger in the towns and hunger in the army.

If we had had a reserve of about 100,000,000 poods of grain with which to hold out and then wear down the kulak by intervening in the market with a view to reducing grain prices, we should not, of course, have resorted to emergency measures. But you know very well that we had no such reserve.

If at that time we had had a foreign currency reserve of 100,000,000 or 150,000,000 rubles with which to import grain from abroad, most likely we should not have resorted to emergency measures. But you know very well that we had no such reserve.

Does that mean that we should continue to remain without a reserve in the future and again resort to the aid of emergency measures? No, it does not. On the contrary, we must do everything in our power to accumulate reserves and to rule out completely the necessity of resorting to any emergency measures. People who contemplate converting the emergency measures into a permanent or prolonged policy of our Party are dangerous, because they are playing with fire and are a source of danger to the bond.

Does it follow from this that we must renounce once for all resort to emergency measures? No, it does not. We have no grounds for asserting that emergency circumstances necessitating resort to emergency measures will never recur. To assert that would be sheer quackery.

Lenin demonstrated the necessity for the New Economic Policy; yet he did not consider it possible under NEP to renounce resort even to the methods of the Poor Peasants' Committees in certain conditions and under certain circumstances. Still less can we renounce once for all resort to emergency measures, which cannot be put on a par with so drastic a measure for combating the kulaks as the methods of the Poor Peasants' Committees.

It may not be superfluous to recall an incident involving Preobrazhensky at the Eleventh Congress of our Party that has a direct bearing on the matter in hand. You know that at the Eleventh Congress in his theses on work in the countryside Preobrazhensky attempted to reject "once for all" under NEP conditions the policy of combating the kulaks by the methods of the Poor Peasants' Committees. Preobrazhensky wrote in his theses: "The policy of repudiating this stratum (the kulaks and well-to-do peasants) and of gross extra-economic suppression of it by the methods of the Poor Peasants' Committees of 1918 would be a most harmful mistake" (§ 2).

You know that Lenin replied to this as follows :

> "The second sentence of the second paragraph (directed against 'the methods of the Poor Peasants' Committees') is harmful and wrong, since war, for example, *might compel us to resort to the methods of the Poor Peasants' Committees.* This should be spoken of quite differently—in this way, for example : in view of the paramount importance of improving agriculture and increasing its output, the policy of the proletariat towards the kulaks and well-to-do peasants *at the present moment** should aim chiefly at *restricting* their exploiting efforts, and so forth. The whole point lies in the ways and means by which our state can and should restrict those efforts and protect the poor peasants. This must be studied and we must see to it that it is studied practically, but general phrases are *futile*" (see *Lenin Miscellany,* IV, p. 391[22])

Clearly, emergency measures must be regarded dialectically, for everything depends on the conditions of time and place.

That, comrades, is how matters stand with the questions of a general character that arose in the course of the discussion.

Allow me to pass now to the question *of the grain problem and the basic causes of our difficulties on the grain front.*

I think that a number of comrades have committed the error of lumping together different kinds of causes of our difficulties on the grain front, of confusing temporary and circumstantial (specific) causes with chronic and fundamental causes. There are two sets of causes of our grain difficulties : chronic, fundamental causes, the elimination of which will require a number of years, and specific, circumstantial causes, which can be eliminated now, if a number of necessary measures are adopted and carried out. To lump all these causes together is to confuse the whole question.

What is the underlying significance of our difficulties on the grain front ? It is that they confront us squarely with the problem of grain, of grain production, with the problem of agriculture in general, and of cereal production in particular.

Do we have a grain problem at all, as an urgent question ? We undoubtedly do. One must be blind to doubt that the grain problem is now harassing every aspect of Soviet social life. We cannot live like gypsies, without grain reserves, without certain reserves in case of harvest failure, without reserves with which to manoeuvre in the market, without reserves against the contingency of war, and, lastly, without some reserves for export. Even the small peasant, for all the meagreness of his husbandry, cannot do without reserves, without certain stocks. Is it not clear that a great country covering one-sixth of the world cannot do without grain reserves for its internal and external requirements ?

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

Supposing the winter crop in the Ukraine had not perished and we had ended the grain procurement year just "breaking even"—could this have been considered enough ? No, it could not. We cannot continue to live just "breaking even." We must have at our disposal a certain minimum of reserves if we want to uphold the position of the Soviet Government both internally and externally.

Firstly, we are not guaranteed against armed attack. Do you think we can defend the country if we have no reserves of grain for the army ? Those comrades were perfectly right who said here that the peasant today is not what he was six years ago, say, when he was afraid that he might lose his land to the landlord. The peasant is already forgetting the landlord. He is now demanding new and better conditions of life. Can we, in the event of enemy attack, wage war against the external enemy on the battle front, and at the same time against the muzhik in the rear in order to get grain urgently for the army ? No, we cannot and must not. In order to defend the country we must have certain stocks for supplying the army, if only for the first six months. Why do we need this six-months' breathing space ? In order to give the peasant time to awaken to the situation, to realise the danger of the war, to see how matters stand and to be ready to do his bit for the common cause of the country's defence. If we content ourselves with just "breaking even," we shall never have reserves against the contingency of war.

Secondly, we are not guaranteed against complications in the grain market. A certain reserve is absolutely essential to enable us to intervene in the grain market and make our price policy effective. For we cannot, and must not, resort every time to emergency measures. But we shall never have such a reserve if we always find ourselves on the edge of a precipice and are content if we can end the procurement year just "breaking even."

Thirdly, we are not guaranteed against crop failure. A certain grain reserve is absolutely essential to enable us in the event of crop failure to supply the famine areas at least to some extent and at least for some time. But we shall not have such a reserve if we do not increase the production of marketable grain and do not positively and decisively abandon the old habit of living without reserves.

Lastly, a reserve is absolutely essential to enable us to export grain. We have to import equipment for industry. We have to import agricultural machines, tractors and spare parts for them. But this cannot be done if we do not export grain, if we do not accumulate a certain reserve of foreign currency obtained by exporting grain. Before the war we used to export from 500,000,000 to 600,000,000 poods of grain annually. We were able to export so much because we went short ourselves. That is true. It should, however, be realised that all the same our marketable grain before the war was *double* what it is today. And it is just because we have now only half as much marketable grain that grain is ceasing to be an item of export. And what does ceasing to export grain mean ? It means losing the source which enabled us to import—as we must import—equipment for industry and tractors and machines for agriculture. Can we go on living in this way—without accumulating grain reserves for export , No, we cannot.

So you see how insecure and unstable our position in the matter of grain reserves is.

This is apart from the fact that not only have we no grain reserves for all these four purposes ; we have not even a minimum reserve to enable us to carry over without distress from one procurement year to the next and to supply the towns uninterruptedly in such difficult months as June and July.

Can it then be denied that the grain problem is acute and that our difficulties on the grain front are serious ?

But, because of our grain difficulties, we are also having difficulties of a political character. Under no circumstances must this be forgotten, comrades. I am referring to the discontent which was to be observed among a certain section of the peasantry, among a certain section of the poor peasants, and also of the middle peasants, and which created a certain threat to the bond.

Of course, it would be quite wrong to say, as Frumkin does in his note, that there is already an estrangement instead of the bond. That is not true, comrades. An estrangement would be a serious thing. An estrangement would mean the beginning of civil war, if not civil war itself. Don't let us frighten ourselves with "terrible" words. Don't let us give way to panic. That would be unworthy of Bolsheviks. An estrangement would mean that the peasantry had broken with the Soviet Government. But if the peasant really had broken with the Soviet Government, *which is the chief purchaser of peasant grain,* he would not be enlarging his crop area. Yet we find that this year spring crop area has been enlarged *in all* the grain areas *without exception.* Does that look like estrangement? Can one call this state of things a "hopeless prospect" for peasant farming, as Frumkin, for example, says it is? Does that look like a "hopeless prospect"?

What is the *basis* of our grain difficulties, meaning by that the *chronic* and *fundamental* causes of the difficulties, and not the temporary, circumstantial ones?

The basis of our grain difficulties lies in the increasingly scattered and divided character of agriculture. It is a fact that agriculture, especially grain farming, is growing smaller in scale, becoming increasingly less remunerative and less productive of marketable surpluses. Whereas before the revolution we had about 15,000,000 or 16,000,000 peasant farms, now we have some 24,000,000 or 25,000,000; moreover, the process of division tends to become more marked.

It is true that our crop area today falls little short of pre-war, and that the *gross* output of grain is only some five per cent less than it was before the war. But the trouble is that, in spite of all this, our output of *marketable* grain is only *half,* that is, about 50 per cent, of pre-war. That is the root of the matter.

What is the point? The point is that small-scale farming is less remunerative, produces smaller marketable surpluses and is less stable than large-scale farming. The Marxist thesis that small-scale production is less profitable than large-scale production fully applies to agriculture also. That is why, from one and the same area, small-scale peasant farming yields much less marketable grain than large-scale farming.

What is the way out of this situation?

There are three ways, as the Political Bureau resolution tells us.

1. The way out is to raise the productivity of small- and middle-peasant farming as far as possible, to replace the wooden plough by the steel plough, to supply small and medium machines, fertiliser, seed and agronomic help, to organise the peasantry into co-operatives, to conclude contracts with whole villages, supplying them with the best-grade seed on loan and thus ensuring the peasants collective credit, and, lastly, to place big machines at their disposal through machine-hiring stations.

Those comrades are mistaken who assert that small-peasant farming has exhausted its potentialities for further development, and that therefore it is not worth while to give it any further help. That is quite untrue. Individual peasant farming still possesses no inconsiderable potentialities for development. One only has to know how to help it to realise these potentialities.

Nor is *Krasnaya Gazeta*[23] right in asserting that the policy of organising the individual peasant farms in supply and marketing co-operatives has not justified itself. That is quite untrue, comrades. On the contrary, the policy of organising supply and marketing co-operatives has justified itself fully, by creating a real basis among the peasantry for a swing towards the side of the collective-farm movement. There is no doubt that if we had not developed supply and marketing co-operatives, we should not have that swing in the attitude of the peasantry towards collective farming which now exists, and which is helping us to lead the collective-farm movement forward.

2. The way out, further, is to help the poor and middle peasants gradually to unite their scattered small farms into large collective farms based on new technical equipment and collective labour, as being more profitable and yielding larger marketable surpluses. I have in mind all forms of uniting small farms into large, socially-conducted farms, from simple co-operatives to artels, which are incomparably more productive and yield far larger marketable surpluses than the scattered small-peasant farms.

That is the basis for the solution of the problem.

Comrades are mistaken when, while advocating collective farms, they accuse us of "rehabilitating" small-peasant farming. They evidently think that the attitude towards the individual peasant farms should be one of fighting and destroying them, and not of assisting them and drawing them over to our side. That is quite wrong, comrades. Individual peasant farming is in no need of "rehabilitation." It is not very remunerative, it is true. But that does not mean that it is altogether unprofitable. We should be destroying the bond if we adopted the attitude of fighting and destroying individual peasant farming, departing from the Leninist position that the collective farms must render day-to-day assistance and support to the individual peasant farms.

Even more mistaken are those who, while extolling the collective farms, declare that individual peasant farming is our "curse." This already smacks of down-right war on peasant farming. Where do they get this idea from? If peasant farming is a "curse," how do they explain the alliance of the working class and the main mass of the peasantry? Alliance of the working class with a "curse"—can there be anything so fantastic? How can they say such things and at the same time preach in favour of the bond? They recall what Lenin said about the necessity of our gradually changing over from the peasant nag to the steel steed of industry. That is very good. But is that the way to change over from one horse to another? To proclaim peasant farming a "curse" before a broad and powerful base has been created in the shape of a ramified system of collective farms—would not the upshot be that we should be left without any horse, without any base at all? (*Voices*: "Quite right!") The mistake of these comrades is that they *counterpose* collective farming to individual peasant farming. But what we want is that these two forms of farming should not be counterposed to one another, but should be *linked together in a bond,* and that within the framework of this bond the collective farms should assist the individual peasant and help little by little to go over to collectivist lines. Yes, what we want is that the peasants should took upon the collective farms not as their enemy, but as their friend who helps them and will help them to emancipate themselves from poverty. (*Voices*: "True!") If that is true, then you should not say that we are "rehabilitating" individual peasant farming, or that peasant farming is our "curse."

What should be said is that, compared with the big collective farm, the small-peasant farm is less profitable, or even the least profitable, but that all the same it is of some, not inconsiderable, benefit. But from what you say it follows that small-peasant farming is altogetherer unprofitable, and perhaps even harmful.

That was not Lenin's opinion of small-peasant farming. Here is what he said on this score in his speech on "The Tax in Kind":

> "If peasant farming can develop further, we must firmly assure its transition to the next stage too, and this transition to the next stage will inevitably consist in the small, isolated peasant farms, the least profitable and most backward, gradually uniting to from socially-conducted, large farms. That is how Socialists have always conceived it. And that is how our Communist Party conceives it" (Vol. XXVI, p. 299).

It follows that individual peasant farming is after all of some benefit.

It is one thing when a higher form of enterprise, large-scale enterprise, contends against a lower form and ruins, kills it. That is what happens under capitalism. It is quite another thing when the higher form of enterprise does not ruin the lower form, but helps it to raise itself, to go over to collectivist lines. That is what happens under the Soviet system.

And here is what Lenin says about the relations between the collective farms and the individual peasant farms :

> "In particular, we must see to it that the law of the Soviet Government (on collective farms and state farms—*J. St.*) requiring that the state farms, agricultural communes and similar associations should *render immediate and all-round assistance to the surrounding middle peasants,* is actually, and moreover fully, carried out. Only if such *assistance is in fact rendered is agreement with the middle peasant feasible.** Only in this way can, and should, his confidence be won" (Vol. XXIV, p. 175).

It follows from this that the collective farms and state farms must assist the peasant farms precisely as individual farms.

Lastly, a third quotation from Lenin :

> "Only if we succeed in practice in showing the peasants the advantages of common, collective, co-operative, artel cultivation of the soil, only if we succeed in helping the peasant by means of co-operative, artel farming, will the working class, which holds state power in its hands, actually prove to the peasant the correctness of its policy and actually secure the real and durable following of the vast masses of the peasantry" (Vol. XXIV, p. 579).

You see how highly Lenin appreciated the value of the collective-farm movement for the socialist transformation of our country.

It is extremely strange that some comrades in their long speeches focussed attention exclusively on the question of the individual peasant farms and did not say a single word, literally not a single word, about the task of promoting collective farms, as an urgent and decisive task of our Party.

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

3. The way out, lastly, is to strengthen the old state farms and to promote new, large state farms, as being the economic units that are the most remunerative and yield the largest marketable surpluses.

Such are the three principal tasks, the accomplishment of which will enable us to solve the grain problem, and thus do away with the very basis of our difficulties on the grain front.

The specific feature of the present moment is that the first task, that of improving individual peasant farming, although it still remains our chief task, *is already insufficient* for the solution of the grain problem.

The specific feature of the present moment is that the first task must be *supplemented* in practice by the two new tasks of promoting collective farms and promoting state farms.

Unless we combine these tasks, unless we work persistently along all these three channels, it will be impossibe to solve the grain problem, whether in the sense of supplying the country with marketable grain or in the sense of transforming our entire national economy on socialist lines.

What was Lenin's view of this matter ? We have a document which shows that the Political Bureau resolution submitted to this plenum fully coincides with the practical plan for the development of agriculture which Lenin outlined in this document. I am referring to the "Mandate of the C.L.D." (Council of Labour and Defence) written in Lenin's own hand. It was published in May 1921. In this document Lenin analyses three groups of practical questions : the first group concerns trade and industry, the second group concerns the promotion of agriculture, and the third group concerns the various economic councils[24] and regional conferences on the regulation of economic affairs.

What does this document say on the subject of agriculture ? Here is a quotation from the "Mandate of the C.L.D.":

> "Second group of questions. Promotion of agriculture : a) peasant farming, b) state farms, c) communes, d) artels, e) co-operatives, f) other forms of socially-conducted farming" (see Vol. XXVI, p. 374).

You will see that the practical conclusions contained in the

Political Bureau resolution on the solution of the grain problem, and of the agricultural problem in general, fully coincide with Lenin's plan as set forth in the "Mandate of the C.L.D." of 1921.

It was very interesting to observe the truly youthful joy with which that giant, Lenin, who could move mountains and bring them face to face, greeted every item of news of the formation of a couple or so of collective farms, or of the arrival of tractors in some state farm. Here, for instance, is an excerpt from a letter to the Society for Technical Aid to Soviet Russia :

> "Dear Comrades, extremely gratifying reports have appeared in our newspapers regarding the work of members of your Society in the state farms of the Kirsanov Uyezd, Tambov Gubernia, and at Mitino Station, Odessa Gubernia, as well as regarding the work of a group of miners from the Donets Basin.... I am applying to the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee requesting that the most outstanding farms should be classed as model farms and rendered special and priority assistance necessary for the favourable development of their work. I once more profoundly thank you in the name of our Republic, and request you to bear in mind that your assistance to us in the way of tractor cultivation of the soil is especially timely and valuable. I am particularly pleased to have this opportunity of congratulating you on your project to organise 200 agricultural communes" (Vol. XXVII, p. 309).

And here is an excerpt from a letter to the Society of Friends of Soviet Russia in America :

> "Dear Comrades : I have just verified by a special request to the Perm Executive Committee, the extraordinary favourable news published in our press with reference to the work of the members of your Society headed by Harold Ware and organised as a Tractor Unit, in the Government of Perm, *on a Soviet Farm** 'Toykino." ... I am appealing to the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee to place this Soviet Farm in the ranks of Model Farms and to render it in every possible way special and extraordinary assistance in its constructive work, as well as supplying it with gasoline, metals and other material necessary for the organisation of a Repair Shop. Once more, I wish to thank you in the name of our Republic and to point out that no other form of relief is so timely and so important for us as the one rendered by you"† (Vol. XXVII, p. 308).

So you see with what joy Lenin received every item of news, however small, regarding the development of collective farms and state farms.

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

† The text is as sent in English.—*Tr.*

Let this be a lesson to all who think they can deceive history and dispense with collective farms and state farms in victoriously building socialism in our country.

I am concluding, comrades. I think that the grain difficulties will not have been without their value for us. Our Party has learned and progressed by overcoming difficulties and crises of every kind. I think that the present difficulties will steel our Bolshevik ranks and induce them to tackle the solution of the grain problem in thorough fashion. And the solution of this problem will remove one of the biggest difficulties standing in the way of the socialist transformation of our country.

Plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U. (B.)
July 4-12, 1928.

Concerning Questions of Agrarian Policy in the U.S.S.R.

Speech Delivered at a Conference of Marxist Students of Agrarian Questions, December 27, 1929[25]

Comrades, the main fact of our social and economic life at the present time, a fact which is attracting universal attention, is the tremendous growth of the collective-farm movement.

The characteristic feature of the present collective-farm movement is that not only are the collective farms being joined by individual groups of poor peasants, as has been the case hitherto, but that they are being joined by the mass of the middle peasants as well. This means that the collective-farm movement has been transformed from a movement of individual groups and sections of the labouring peasants into a movement of millions and millions of the main mass of the peasantry. This, by the way, explains the tremendously important fact that the collective-farm movement, which has assumed the character of a mighty and growing *anti-kulak* avalanche, is sweeping the resistance of the kulak from its path, is shattering the kulak class and paving the way for extensive socialist construction in the countryside.

But while we have reason to be proud of the *practical* successes achieved in socialist construction, the same cannot be said with regard to our *theoretical* work in the economic field in general, and in that of agriculture in particular. More than that, it must be admitted that theoretical thought is not keeping pace with our practical successes, that there is a certain gap between our practical successes and the development of theoretical thought. Yet it is essential that theoretical work should not only keep pace with practical work but should keep ahead of it and equip our practical workers in their fight for the victory of socialism.

I shall not dwell at length here on the importance of theory. You are quite well aware of its importance. You know that theory, if it is genuine theory, gives practical workers the power of orientation, clarity of perspective, confidence in their work, faith in the victory of our cause. All this is, and necessarily must be, immensely important in our work of socialist construction. The unfortunate thing is that precisely in this sphere, in the sphere of the theoretical treatment of questions of our economy, we are beginning to lag behind.

How else can we explain the fact that in our country, in our social and political life, various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois theories on questions of our economy are still current? How can we explain the fact that these theories and would-be theories are not yet meeting with a proper rebuff? How can we explain the fact that a number of fundamental theses of Marxist-Leninist political economy, which are the most effective antidote to bourgeois and petty-bourgeois theories, are beginning to be forgotten, are not popularised in our press, are for some reason not placed in the foreground? Is it difficult to understand that unless a relentless fight against bourgeois theories is waged on the basis of Marxist-Leninist theory, it will be impossible to achieve complete victory over our class enemies?

New practical experience is giving rise to a new approach to the problems of the economy of the transition period. Questions of NEP, of classes, of the rate of construction, of the bond with the peasantry, of the Party's policy, are now presented in a new way. If we are not to lag behind practice we must immediately begin to work on all these problems in the light of the new situation. Unless we do this it will be impossible to overcome the bourgeois theories which are stuffing the heads of our practical workers with rubbish. Unless we do this it will be impossible to eradicate these theories which are acquiring the tenacity of prejudices. For only by combating bourgeois prejudices in the field of theory is it possible to consolidate the position of Marxism-Leninism.

Permit me now to characterise at least a few of these bourgeois prejudices which are called theories, and to demonstrate their unsoundness in the light of certain key problems of our work of construction.

I

THE THEORY OF "EQUILIBRIUM"

You know, of course, that the so-called theory of "equilibrium" between the sectors of our national economy is still current among Communists. This theory, of course, has nothing in common with Marxism. Nevertheless, it is a theory that is being spread by a number of people in the camp of the Right deviators.

This theory assumes that we have, in the first place, a socialist sector—which is one compartment, as it were—and that in addition we have a non-socialist or, if you like, capitalist sector—which is another compartment. These two "compartments" are on different rails and glide peacefully forward, without touching each other. Geometry teaches that parallel lines do not meet. But the authors of this remarkable theory believe that these parallel lines will meet eventually, and that when they do, we shall have socialism. This theory overlooks the fact that behind these so-called "compartments" there are classes, and that the movement of these compartments takes place by way of a fierce class struggle, a life-and-death struggle, a struggle on the principle of "who will beat whom?"

It is not difficult to realise that this theory has nothing in common with Leninism. It is not difficult to realise that, objectively, the purpose of this theory is to defend the position of individual peasant farming, to arm the kulak elements with a "new" theoretical weapon in their struggle against the collective farms, and to discredit the collective farms.

Nevertheless, this theory is still current in our press. And it cannot be said that it has met with a serious rebuff, let alone a crushing rebuff, from our theoreticians. How can this incongruity be explained except by the backwardness of our theoretical thought?

And yet, all that is needed is to take from the treasury of Marxism the theory of reproduction and set it up against the theory of equilibrium of the sectors for the latter theory to be wiped out without leaving a trace. Indeed, the Marxist theory of reproduction teaches that modern society cannot develop without accumulating from year to year, and accumulation is impossible unlesss there is expanded reproduction from year to year. This is clear and comprehensible. Our large-scale, centralised, socialist industry is developing according to the Marxist theory of expanded reproduction; for it is growing in volume from year to year, it has its accumulations and is advancing with giant strides.

But our large-scale industry does not constitute the whole of the national economy. On the contrary, small-peasant economy still predominates in it. Can we say that our small-peasant economy is developing according to the principle of expanded reproduction? No, we cannot. Not only is there no annual expanded reproduction in the bulk of our small-peasant economy, but, on the contrary, it is seldom able to achieve even simple reproduction. Can we advance our socialised industry at an accelerated rate while we have such an agricultural basis as small-peasant economy, which is incapable of expanded reproduction, and which, in addition, is the predominant force in our national economy? No, we cannot. Can Soviet power and the work of socialist construction rest for any length of time on two *different* foundations: on the most large-scale and concentrated socialist industry, and the most disunited and backward, small-commodity peasant economy? No, they cannot. Sooner or later this would be bound to end in the complete collapse of the whole national economy.

What, then, is the way out? The way out lies in making agriculture large-scale, in making it capable of accumulation, of expanded reproduction, and in thus transforming the agricultural basis of the national economy.

But how is it to be made large-scale?

There are two ways of doing this. There is the *capitalist* way, which is to make agriculture large-scale by implanting capitalism in agriculture—a way which leads to the impoverishment of the peasantry and to the development of capitalist enterprises in agriculture. We reject this way as incompatible with Soviet economy.

There is another way: the *socialist* way, which is to introduce collective farms and state farms into agriculture, the way which leads to uniting the small-peasant farms into large collective farms, employing machinery and scientific methods of farming, and capable of developing further, for such farms can achieve expanded reproduction.

And so, the question stands as follows: either one way or the other, either *back*—to capitalism, or *forward*—to socialism. There is not, and cannot be, any third way.

The theory of "equilibrium" is an attempt to indicate a third way. And precisely because it is based on a third (non-existent) way, it is utopian and anti-Marxist.

You see, therefore, that all that was needed was to counterpose Marx's theory of reproduction to this theory of "equilibrium" of the sectors for the latter theory to be wiped out without leaving a trace.

Why, then, do our Marxist students of agrarian questions not do this? In whose interest is it that the ridiculous theory of "equilibrium" should have currency in our press while the Marxist theory of reproduction is kept hidden?

II

THE THEORY OF "SPONTANEITY" IN SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION

Let us now take the second prejudice in political economy, the second bourgeois type of theory. I have in mind the theory of "spontaneity" in socialist construction—a theory which has nothing in common with Marxism, but which is being zealously advocated by our comrades of the Right camp.

The authors of this theory assert approximately the following. There was a time when capitalism existed in our country, industry developed on a capitalist basis, and the countryside followed the capitalist town spontaneously, automatically, becoming transformed in the image of the capitalist town. Since *that* is what happened under capitalism, why should not the same thing happen under the Soviet economic system as well? Why should not the countryside, small-peasant farming, automatically follow the socialist town, becoming transformed spontaneously in the image of the socialist town? On these grounds the authors of this theory assert that the countryside can follow the socialist town automatically. Hence, the question arises: Is it worth our while bothering about organising state farms and collective farms; is it worth while breaking lances over this if the countryside may in any case follow the socialist town?

Here you have another theory which, objectively, seeks to supply the capitalist elements in the countryside with a new weapon for their struggle against the collective farms.

The anti-Marxist nature of this theory is beyond all doubt.

Is it not strange that our theoreticians have not yet taken the trouble to explode this queer theory which is stuffing the heads of our practical collective-farm workers with rubbish?

There is no doubt that the leading role of the socialist town in relation to the small-peasant, individualist countryside is a great one and of inestimable value. It is indeed upon this that the role of industry in transforming agriculture is based. But is this factor sufficient to cause the small-peasant countryside automatically to follow the town in the work of socialist construction? No, it is not sufficient.

Under capitalism the countryside automatically followed the town because the capitalist economy of the town and the individual small-commodity economy of the peasant are, basically, economies of *the same type*. Of course, small-peasant commodity economy is not yet capitalist economy. But it is, basically, the same type of economy as capitalist economy since it rests on private ownership of the means of production. Lenin was a thousand times right when, in his notes on Bukharin's *Economics of the Transition Period*, he referred to the "commodity-*capitalist* tendency of the peasantry" in contrast to the "*socialist* tendency of the proletariat."[26] It is this that explains why "small production *engenders* capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale"[27] (*Lenin*).

Is it possible to say that basically small-commodity peasant economy is the same type of economy as socialist production in the towns? Obviously, it is impossible to say so without breaking with Marxism. Otherwise Lenin would not have said that "as long as we live in a small-peasant country, there is a surer economic basis for capitalism in Russia than for communism."[28]

Consequently, the theory of "spontaneity" in socialist construction is a rotten, anti-Leninist theory.

Consequently, in order that the small-peasant countryside should follow the socialist town, it is necessary, apart from everything else, to *introduce* in the countryside large socialist farms in the form of state farms and collective farms, as bases of socialism, which—headed by the socialist town—will be able *to take the lead* of the main mass of the peasantry.

Consequently, the theory of "spontaneity" in socialist construction is an anti-Marxist theory. The socialist town can *lead* the small-peasant countryside, only by *introducing* collective farms and state farms and by transforming the countryside after a new, socialist pattern.

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* Lenin's italics—*J. St.*

It is strange that the anti-Marxist theory of "spontaneity" in socialist construction has hitherto not met with a proper rebuff from our agrarian theoreticians.

III

THE THEORY OF THE "STABILITY" OF SMALL-PEASANT FARMING

Let us now take the third prejudice in political economy, the theory of the "stability" of small-peasant farming. Everybody is familiar with the argument of bourgeois political economy that the well-known Marxist thesis about the advantages of large-scale production over small production applies only to industry, and does not apply to agriculture. Social-Democratic theoreticians like David and Hertz, who advocate this theory, have tried to "base themselves" on the fact that the small peasant is enduring and patient, that he is ready to bear any privation if only he can hold on to his little plot of land, and that, as a consequence, small-peasant economy displays stability in the struggle against large-scale economy in agriculture.

It is not difficult to understand that such "stability" is worse than any instability. It is not difficult to understand that this anti-Marxist theory has only one aim: to eulogise and strengthen the capitalist system which ruins the vast masses of small peasants. And it is precisely because this theory pursues this aim that it has been so easy for Marxists to shatter it.

But that is not the point just now. The point is that our practice, our reality, is providing new arguments against this theory, but our theoreticians, strangely enough, either will not, or cannot, make use of this new weapon against the enemies of the working class. I have in mind our practice in abolishing private ownership of land, our practice in nationalising the land, our practice which liberates the small peasant from his slavish attachment to his little plot of land and thereby helps the change from *small-scale* peasant farming to *large-scale* collective farming.

Indeed, what is it that has tied, is still tying and will continue to tie the small peasant of Western Europe to his small-commodity farming? Primarily, and mainly, the fact that he owns his little plot of land, the existence of private ownership of land. For years he saved up money in order to buy a little plot of land; he bought it, and of course he does not want to part with it, preferring to endure any privation, preferring to sink into barbarism and abject poverty, if ony he can hold on to his little plot of land, the basis of his individual economy.

Can it be said that this factor, in this form, continues to operate in our country, under the Soviet system? No, it cannot be said. It cannot be said because there is no private ownership of land in our country. And precisely because there is no private ownership of land in our country, our peasants do not display that slavish attachment to a plot of land which is seen in the West. And this circumstance cannot but facilitate the change from small-peasant farming to collective farming.

That is one of the reasons why the *large* farms, the collective farms of our countryside, are able in our country, where the land is nationalised, to demonstrate so easily their *superiority* over the *small* peasant farms.

That is the great revolutionary significance of the Soviet agrarian laws which abolished absolute rent, abolished the private ownership of land and carried out the nationalisation of the land.

But it follows from this that we now have at our command a new argument against the bourgeois economists who proclaim the stability of small-peasant farming in its struggle against large-scale farming.

Why then is this new argument not sufficiently utilised by our agrarian theoreticians in their struggle against all the various bourgeois theories?

When we nationalised the land our point of departure was, among other things, the theoretical premises laid down in the third volume of *Capital*, in Marx's well-known book *Theories of Surplus-Value*, and in Lenin's works on agrarian questions, which represent an extremely rich treasury of theoretical thought. I am referring to the theory of ground rent in general, and the theory of absolute ground rent in particular. It is now clear that the theoretical principles laid down in these works have been brilliantly confirmed by the practical experience of our work of socialist construction in town and country.

The only incomprehensible thing is why the anti-scientific theories of "Soviet" economists like Chayanov should be freely current in our press, while Marx's, Engels's and Lenin's works of genius dealing with the theory of ground rent and absolute ground rent are not popularised and brought into the foreground, are kept hidden.

You, no doubt, remember Engels's well-known pamphlet *The Peasant Question.* You, of course, remember with what circumspection Engels approaches the question of the transition of the small peasants to the path of co-operative farming, to the path of collective farming. Permit me to quote the passage in question from Engels:

> "We are decidedly on the side of the small peasant; we shall do everything at all permissible to make his lot more bearable, to facilitate his transition to the co-operative should he decide to do so, and even to make it possible for him to remain *on his little plot of land for a protracted length of time* to think the matter over, should he still be unable to bring himself to this decision."*[29]

You see with what circumspection Engels approaches the question of the transition of individual peasant farming to collectivist lines. How are we to explain this circumspection displayed by Engels, which at first sight seems exaggerated? What did he proceed from? Obviously, he proceeded from the existence of private ownership of land, from the fact that the peasant has "his little plot of land" which he will find it hard to part with. Such is the peasantry in the West. Such is the peasantry in capitalist countries, where private ownership of land exists. Naturally, great circumspection is needed there.

Can it be said that such a situation exists in our country, in the U.S.S.R.? No, it cannot. It cannot be said because here we have no private ownership of land chaining the peasant to his individual farm. It cannot be said because in our country the land is nationalised, and this facilitates the transition of the individual peasant to collectivist lines.

That is one of the reasons for the comparative ease and rapidity with which the collective-farm movement has of late been developing in our country.

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

It is to be regretted that our agrarian theoreticians have not yet attempted to bring out with the proper clarity this difference between the situation of the peasantry in our country and in the West. And yet this would be of the utmost value not only for us, working in the Soviet Union, but for Communists in all countries. For it is not a matter of indifference to the proletarian revolution in the capitalist countries whether, from the first day of the seizure of power by the proletariat, socialism will have to be built there on the basis of the nationalisation of the land or without this basis.

In my recent article ("A Year of Great Change"), I advanced certain arguments to prove the superiority of large-scale farming over small farming; in this I had in mind large state farms. It is self-evident that all these arguments fully and entirely apply also to collective farms, as large economic units. I am speaking not only of developed collective farms, which have machines and tractors at their disposal, but also of collective farms in their primary stage, which represent, as it were, the manufacture period of collective-farm development and are based on peasant farm implements. I am referring to the collective farms in their primary stage which are now being formed in the areas of complete collectivisation, and which are based upon the simple pooling of the peasants' implements of production.

Take, for instance, the collective farms of the Khoper area in the former Don region. Outwardly, from the point of view of technical equipment, these collective farms scarcely differ from small-peasant farms (few machines, few tractors). And yet the simple pooling of the peasants' implements of production within the collective farms has produced results of which our practical workers have never dreamt. What are these results? The fact that the transition to collective farming has brought about an increase of the crop area by 30, 40 and 50 per cent. How are these "dizzying" results to be explained ? By the fact that the peasants, who were powerless under the conditions of individual labour, have been transformed into a mighty force once they have pooled their implements and have united in collective farms. By the fact that it has become possible for the peasants to till neglected land and virgin soil, which is difficult to cultivate by individual labour. By the fact that the peasants have been enabled to avail themselves of virgin soil. By the fact that wasteland, isolated plots, field boundaries, etc., etc., could now be cultivated.

The question of cultivating neglected land and virgin soil is of tremendous importance for our agriculture. You know that the pivot of the revolutionary movement in Russia in the old days was the agrarian question. You know that one of the aims of the agrarian movement was to do away with the shortage of land. At that time there were many who thought that this shortage of land was absolute, i.e., that there was in Russia no more free land suitable for cultivation. And what has actually proved to be the situation? Now it is quite clear that scores of millions of hectares of free land were and still are available in the U.S.S.R. But the peasants were quite unable to till this land with their wretched implements. And precisely because they were unable to till neglected land and virgin soil, they longed for "soft soil," for the soil which belonged to the landlords, for soil which could be tilled with the aid of peasant implements by individual labour. That was at the bottom of the "land shortage." It is not surprising, therefore, that our Grain Trust, which is equipped with tractors, is now able to place under cultivation some twenty million hectares of free land, land unoccupied by peasants and unfit for cultivation by individual labour with the aid of small-peasant implements.

The significance of the collective-farm movement in all its phases—both in its primary and in its more developed phase when it is equipped with tractors—lies, for one thing, in the fact that it is now possible for the peasants to place under cultivation neglected land and virgin soil. That is the secret of the tremendous expansion of the crop area attending the transition of the peasants to collective labour. That is one of the reasons for the superiority of the collective farms over individual peasant farms.

It goes without saying that the superiority of the collective farms over the individual peasant farms will become even more incontestable when our machine and tractor stations and tractor columns come to the aid of the newly-formed collective farms in the areas of complete collectivisation, and when the collective farms will be in a position to own tractors and harvester combines.

IV

TOWN AND COUNTRY

In regard to the so-called "scissors," there is a prejudice, fostered by bourgeois economists, against which a merciless war must be declared, as against all the other bourgeois theories that, unfortunately, are circulated in the Soviet press. I have in mind the theory which alleges that the October Revolution brought the peasantry fewer benefits than the February Revolution, that, in fact, the October Revolution brought no benefits to the peasantry.

At one time this prejudice was boosted in our press by a "Soviet" economist. That "Soviet" economist, it is true, later renounced his theory. (*A voice*: "Who was it?") It was Groman. But this theory was seized upon by the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition and used against the Party. Moreover, there are no grounds for claiming that it is not current even now in "Soviet" public circles.

This is a very important question, comrades. It touches upon the problem of the relations between town and country. It touches upon the problem of eliminating the antithesis between town and country. It touches upon the very urgent question of the "scissors." I think, therefore, that it is worth while examining this strange theory.

Is it true that the October Revolution brought no benefits to the peasants? Let us turn to the facts.

I have before me the table drawn up by Comrade Nemchinov, the well-known statistician, which was published in my article "On the Grain Front."[30] From this table it is seen that in pre-revolutionary times the landlords "produced" not less than 600,000,000 poods of grain. Hence, the *landlords* were then the holders of 600,000,000 poods of grain.

The *kulaks,* as shown in this table, at that time "produced" 1,900,000,000 poods of grain. That represents the very great power which the kulaks wielded at that time.

The *poor* and *middle* peasants, as shown in the same table, produced 2,500,000,000 poods of grain.

That was the situation in the old countryside, prior to the October Revolution.

What changes have taken place in the countryside since October? I quote the figures from the same table. Take, for instance, the year 1927. How much did the *landlords* produce in that year? Obviously, they produced nothing and could not produce anything because they had been abolished by the October Revolution. You will realise that that must have been a great relief to the peasantry; for the peasants were liberated from the yoke of the landlords. That, of course, was a great gain for the peasantry, obtained as a result of the October Revolution.

How much did the *kulaks* produce in 1927? Six hundred million poods of grain instead of 1,900,000,000. Thus, during the period following the October Revolution the kulaks had lost more than two-thirds of their power. You will realise that this was bound to ease the situation of the poor and middle peasants.

And how much did the *poor* and *middle* peasants produce in 1927? Four thousand million poods, instead of 2,500,000 poods. Thus, after the October Revolution the poor and middle peasants began to produce 1,500,000,000 poods *more* grain than in pre-revolutionary times.

There you have facts which show that the October Revolution brought colossal gains to the poor and middle peasants.

That is what the October Revolution brought to the poor and middle peasants.

How, after this, can it be asserted that the October Revolution brought no benefits to the peasants?

But that is not all, comrades. The October Revolution abolished private ownership of land, did away with the purchase and sale of land, carried out the nationalisation of the land. What does this mean? It means that now the peasant has no need to buy land in order to produce grain. Formerly he was saving up for years in order to acquire land; he got into debt, went into bondage, if only he could buy a piece of land. The expense which the purchase of land involved naturally increased the cost of production of grain. Now, the peasant does not have to do that. He can produce grain now without buying land. Consequently, the hundreds of millions of rubles that formerly were spent by the peasants for the purchase of land now remain in their pockets. Does this ease the situation of the peasants or not? Obviously, it does.

Further. Until recently, the peasant was compelled to dig the soil with old-fashioned implements by individual labour. Everyone knows that individual labour, equipped with old-fashioned, now unsuitable, instruments of production, does not bring the grains required to enable one to lead a tolerable existence, systematically improve one's material position, develop one's culture and emerge on to the high road of socialist construction. Today, after the accelerated development of the collective-farm movement, the peasants are able to combine their labour with that of their neighbours, to unite in collective farms, to plough virgin soil, to utilise neglected land, to obtain machines and tractors and thereby double or even treble the productivity of labour. And what does this mean ? It means that today the peasant, by joining the collective farm, is able to produce much more than formerly with the same expenditure of labour. It means, therefore, that grain will be produced much more cheaply than was the case until quite recently. It means, finally, that, with stable prices, the peasant can obtain much more for his grain than he has obtained up to now.

How, after all this, can it be asserted that the October Revolution brought no gains to the peasantry?

Is it not clear that those who utter such fictions obviously slander the Party and the Soviet power?

But what follows from all this?

It follows that the question of the "scissors," the question of doing away with the "scissors," must now be approached in a new way. It follows that if the collective-farm movement grows at the present rate, the "scissors" will be abolished in the near future. It follows that the question of the relations between town and country is now put on a new basis, that the antithesis between town and country will disappear at an accelerated pace.

This circumstance, comrades, is of very great importance for our whole work of construction. It transforms the mentality of the peasant and turns him towards the town. It creates the basis for eliminating the antithesis between town and country. It creates the basis for the slogan of the Party—"face to the countryside"—to be supplemented by the slogan of the peasant collective farmers: "face to the town."

Nor is there anything surprising in this, for the peasant is now receiving from the town machines, tractors, agronomists, organisers and, finally, direct assistance in fighting and overcoming the kulaks. The old type of peasant, with his savage distrust of the town, which he regarded as a plunderer, is passing into the background. His place is being taken by the new peasant, by the collective-farm peasant, who looks to the town with the hope of receiving real assistance *in production.* The place of the old type of peasant who was afraid of sinking to the level of the poor peasants and only stealthily (for he could be deprived of the franchise!) rose to the position of a kulak, is being taken by the new peasant, with a new prospect before him—that of joining a collective farm and emerging from poverty and ignorance on to the high road of economic and cultural progress.

That is the turn things are taking, comrades.

It is all the more regrettable, comrades, that our agrarian theoreticians have not taken all measures to explode and eradicate all bourgeois theories which seek to discredit the gains of the October Revolution and the growing collective-farm movement.

V

THE NATURE OF COLLECTIVE FARMS

The collective farm, as a *type* of economy, is one of the forms of socialist economy. There can be no doubt whatever about that.

One of the speakers here tried to discredit the collective farms. He asserted that the collective farms, as econimic organisations, have nothing in common with the socialist form of economy. I must say, comrades, that such a characterisation of the collective farms is absolutely wrong. There can be no doubt that it has nothing in common with the true state of affairs.

What determines the type of an economy? Obviously, the relations between the people in the process of production. How else can the type of an economy be determined? But is there in the collective farms a class of people who own the means of production and a class of people who are deprived of these means of production? Is there an exploiting class and an exploited class in the collective farms? Does not the collective farm represent the socialisation of the principal instruments of production on land belonging to the state? What grounds are there for asserting that the collective farms, as a type of economy, do not represent one of the forms of socialist economy?

Of course, there are contradictions in the collective farms. Of course, there are individualistic and even kulak survivals in the collective farms, which have not yet disappeared, but which are bound to disappear in the course of time as the collective farms become stronger, as they are provided with more machines. But can it be denied that the collective farms as a whole, with all their contradictions and shortcomings, the collective farms as an *economic* fact, represent, in the main, a new path of development of the countryside, the path of *socialist* development of the countryside in *contradistinction* to the kulak, *capitalist* path of development? Can it be denied that the collective farms (I am speaking of real, not sham collective farms) represent, under our conditions, a base and centre of socialist construction in the countryside—a base and centre which have grown up in desperate clashes with the capitalist elements?

Is it not clear that the attempts of some comrades to discredit the collective farms and declare them a bourgeois form of economy are devoid of all foundation?

In 1923 we did not yet have a mass collective-farm movement. Lenin, in his pamphlet *On Co-operation*, had in mind all forms of co-operation, both its lower forms (supply and marketing co-operatives) and its higher forms (collective farms). What did he say at that time about co-operation, about co-operative enterprises? Here is a quotation from Lenin's pamphlet *On Co-operation*:

> "Under our present system, co-operative enterprises differ from private capitalist enterprises because they are collective enterprises, but they *do not differ** from socialist enterprises if the land on which they are situated and the means of production belong to the state, i.e., the working class" (Vol. XXVII, p. 396).

Hence, Lenin takes the co-operative enterprises not by themselves, but in connection with our present system, in connection with the fact that they function on land belonging to the state, in a country where the means of production belong to the state; and, regarding them in this light, Lenin declares that co-operative enterprises do not differ from socialist enterprises.

That is what Lenin says about co-operative enterprises in general.

Is it not clear that there is all the more ground for saying the same about the collective farms in our period?

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

This, by the way, explains why Lenin regarded the "mere growth of co-operation" under our conditions as "identical with the growth of socialism."

As you see, the speaker I referred to above, in trying to discredit the collective farms, committed a grave mistake against Leninism.

This mistake led him to another mistake—about the class struggle in the collective farms. The speaker portrayed the class struggle in the collective farms in such vivid colours that one might think that the class struggle in the collective farms *does not differ* from the class struggle in the absence of collective farms. Indeed, one might think that in the collective farms it becomes even fiercer. Incidentally, the speaker mentioned is not the only one who has erred in this matter. Idle talk about the class struggle, squealing and shrieking about the class struggle in the collective farms, is now characteristic of all our noisy "Lefts." The most comical thing about this squealing is that the squealers "see" the class struggle where it does not exist, or hardly exists, but fail to see it where it does exist and is glaringly manifest.

Are there elements of the class struggle in the collective farms? Yes, there are. There are bound to be elements of the class struggle in the collective farms as long as there still remain survivals of individualistic, or even kulak, mentality, as long as there still exists a certain degree of material inequality. Can it be said that the class struggle in the collective farms is equivalent to the class struggle in the absence of collective farms? No, it cannot. The mistake our "Left" phrase-mongers make lies precisely in not seeing the difference.

What does the class struggle imply *in the absence of* collective farms, *prior to* the establishment of collective farms? It implies a fight against the kulak who *owns* the instruments and means of production and who keeps the poor peasants *in bondage* with the aid of those instruments and means of production. It is a life-and-death struggle.

But what does the class struggle imply with the collective farms *in existence?* It implies, firstly, that the kulak has been defeated and deprived of the instruments and means of production. It implies, secondly, that the poor and middle peasants are united in collective farms on the basis of the socialisation of the principal instruments and means of production. It implies, finally, that it is a struggle between members of collective farms, some of whom have not yet rid themselves of individualistic and kulak survivals and are striving to turn the inequality that exists to some extent in the collective farms to their own advantage, while the others want to eliminate these survivals and this inequality. Is it not clear that only the blind can fail to see the difference between the class struggle with the collective farms in existence and the class struggle in the absence of collective farms?

It would be a mistake to believe that once collective farms exist we have all that is necessary for building socialism. It would be all the more a mistake to believe that the members of the collective farms have already become Socialists. No, a great deal of work has still to be done to remould the peasant collective farmer, to set right his individualistic mentality and to transform him into a real working member of a socialist society. And the more rapidly the collective farms are provided with machines, the more rapidly they are supplied with tractors, the more rapidly will this be achieved. But this does not in the least belittle the very great importance of the collective farms as a lever for the socialist transformation of the countryside. The great importance of the collective farms lies precisely in that they represent the principal base for the employment of machinery and tractors in agriculture, that they constitute the principal base for remoulding the peasant, for changing his mentality in the spirit of socialism. Lenin was right when he said:

> "The remaking of the small tiller, the remoulding of his whole mentality and habits, is a work of generations. As regards the small tiller, this problem can be solved, his whole mentality can be put on healthy lines, so to speak, only by the material base, by technical means, by introducing tractors and machines in agriculture on a mass scale, by electrification on a mass scale" (Vol. XXVI, p. 239).

Who can deny that the collective farms are indeed that form of socialist economy which alone can draw the vast masses of the small individual peasants into large-scale farming, with its machines and tractors as the levers of economic progress, the levers of the socialist development of agriculture?

Our "Left" phrasemongers have forgotten all that.

And our speaker has forgotten about it, too.

VI

THE CLASS CHANGES AND THE TURN IN THE PARTY'S POLICY

Finally, the question of the class changes in our country and the offensive of socialism against the capitalist elements in the countryside.

The characteristic feature in the work of our Party during the past year is that we, as a Party, as the Soviet power:

a) have developed an offensive along the whole front against the capitalist elements in the countryside;

b) that this offensive, as you know, has yielded and continues to yield very appreciable, *positive* results.

What does this mean? It means that we have passed from the policy of *restricting* the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks to the policy of *eliminating* the kulaks as a class. It means that we have carried out, and are continuing to carry out, one of the decisive turns in our whole policy.

Until recently the Party adhered to the policy of *restricting* the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks. As you know, this policy was proclaimed as far back as the Eighth Party Congress. It was again announced at the time of the introduction of the NEP and at the Eleventh Congress of our Party. We all remember Lenin's well-known letter about Preobrazhensky's theses[31] (1922), in which Lenin once again returned to the need for pursuing this policy. Finally, this policy was confirmed by the Ffteenth Congress of our Party. And it was this policy that we were pursuing until recently.

Was this policy correct? Yes, it was absolutely correct at the time. Could we have undertaken such an offensive against the kulaks some five years or three years ago? Could we then have counted on success in such an offensive? No, we could not. That would have been the most dangerous adventurism. It would have been a very dangerous playing at an offensive. For we should certainly have failed, and our failure would have strengthened the position of the kulaks. Why? Because we did not yet have in the countryside strong points in the form of a wide network of state farms and collective farms which could be the basis for a determined offensive against the kulaks. Because at that time we were not yet able to *replace* the capitalist production of the kulaks by the socialist production of the collective farms and state farms.

In 1926-1927, the Zinoviev-Trotsky opposition did its utmost to impose upon the Party the policy of an immediate offensive against the kulaks. The Party did not embark on that dangerous adventure, for it knew that serious people cannot afford to play at an offensive. An offensive against the kulaks is a serious matter. It should not be confused with declamations against the kulaks. Nor should it be confused with a policy of pin-pricks against the kulaks, which the Zinoviev-Trotsky opposition did its utmost to impose upon the Party. To launch an offensive against the kulaks means that we must smash the kulaks, eliminate them as a class. Unless we set ourselves these aims, an offensive would be mere declamation, pin-pricks, phrasemongering, anything but a real Bolshevik offensive. To launch an offensive against the kulaks means that we must prepare for it and then strike at the kulaks, strike so hard as to prevent them from rising to their feet again. That is what we Bolsheviks call a real offensive. Could we have undertaken such an offensive some five years or three years ago with any prospect of success? No, we could not.

Indeed, in 1927 the kulaks produced over 600,000,000 poods of grain, about 130,000,000 poods of which they marketed outside the rural districts. That was a rather serious power, which had to be reckoned with. How much did our collective farms and state farms produce at that time? About 80,000,000 poods, of which about 35,000,000 poods were sent to the market (marketable grain). Judge for yourselves, could we at that time have *replaced* the kulak output and kulak marketable grain by the output and marketable grain of our collective farms and state farms? Obviously, we could not.

What would it have meant to launch a determined offensive against the kulaks under such conditions? It would have meant certain failure, strengthening the position of the kulaks and being left without grain. That is why we could not and should not have undertaken a determined offensive against the kulaks at that time, in spite of the adventurist declamations of the Zinoviev-Trotsky opposition.

But today? What is the position now? Today, we have an adequate material base for us to strike at the kulaks, to break their resistance, to eliminate them as a class, and to *replace* their output by the output of the collective farms and state farms. You know that in 1929 the grain produced on the collective farms and state farms has amounted to not less than 400,000,000 poods (200,000,000 poods less than the gross output of the kulak farms in 1927). You also know that in 1929 the collective farms and state farms have supplied more than 130,000,000 poods of marketable grain (i.e., more than the kulaks in 1927). Lastly, you know that in 1930 the gross output of the collective farms and state farms will amount to not less than 900,000,000 poods of grain (i.e., more than the gross output of the kulaks in 1927), and their output of marketable grain will be not less than 400,000,000 poods (i.e., incomparably more than the kulaks supplied in 1927).

That is how matters stand with us now, comrades.

There you have the change that has taken place in the economy of our country.

Now, as you see, we have the material base which enables us to *replace* the kulak output by the output of the collective farms and state farms. It is for this very reason that our determined offensive against the kulaks is now meeting with undeniable success.

That is how an offensive against the kulaks must be carried on, if we mean a genuine and determined offensive and not mere futile declamations against the kulaks.

That is why we have recently passed from the policy of *restricting* the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks to the policy of *eliminating the kulaks as a class.*

Well, and what about the policy of dekulakisation ? Can we permit dekulakisation in the areas of complete collectivisation? This question is asked in various quarters. A ridiculous question ! We could not permit dekulakisation as long as we were pursuing the policy of restricting the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks, as long as we were unable to go over to a determined offensive against the kulaks, as long as we were unable to replace the kulak output by the output of the collective farms and state farms. At that time the policy of not permitting dekulakisation was necessary and correct. But now ? Now things are different. Now we are able to carry on a determined offensive against the kulaks, break their resistance, eliminate them as a class and replace their output by the output of the collective farms and state farms. Now, dekulakisation is being carried out by the masses of poor and middle peasants themselves, who are putting complete collectivisation into practice. Now, dekulakisation in the areas of complete collectivisation is no longer just an administrative measure. Now, it is an integral part of the formation and development of the collective farms. Consequently it is now ridiculous and foolish to discourse at length on dekulakisation. When the head is off, one does not mourn for the hair.

There is another question which seems no less ridiculous : whether the kulaks should be permitted to join the collective farms. Of course not, for they are sworn enemies of the collective-farm movement.

VII

CONCLUSION

The above, comrades, are six key questions which the theoretical work of our Marxist students of agrarian questions cannot ignore.

The importance of these questions lies, above all, in the fact that a Marxist analysis of them makes it possible to eradicate all the various bourgeois theories which sometimes—to our shame—are circulated by our own comrades, by Communists, and which stuff the heads of our practical workers with rubbish. And these theories should have been eradicated and discarded long ago. For only in a relentless fight against these and similar theories can theoretical thought among Marxist students of agrarian questions develop and grow strong.

The importance of these questions lies, lastly, in the fact that they give a new aspect to the old problems of the economy of the transition period.

Questions of NEP, of classes, of the collective farms, of the economy of the transition period, are now presented in a new way.

The mistake of those who interpret NEP as a retreat, and only as a retreat, must be exposed. As a matter of fact, even when the New Economic Policy was being introduced, Lenin said that it was not only a retreat, but also the preparation for a new, determined offensive against the capitalist elements in town and country.

The mistake of those who think that NEP is necessary only as a link between town and country must be exposed. It is not just any kind of link between town and country that we need. What we need is a link that will ensure the victory of socialism. And if we adhere to NEP it is because it serves the cause of socialism. When it ceases to serve the cause of socialism we shall get rid of it. Lenin said that NEP had been introduced in earnest and for a long time. But he never said it had been introduced for all time.

We must also raise the question of popularising the Marxist theory of reproduction. We must examine the question of the structure of the balance sheet of our national economy. What the Central Statistical Board published in 1926 as the balance sheet of the national economy is not a balance sheet, but a juggling with figures. Nor is the manner in which Bazarov and Groman treat the problem of the balance sheet of the national economy suitable. The structure of the balance sheet of the national economy of the U.S.S.R. must be worked out by the revolutionary Marxists if they desire at all to devote themselves to the questions of the economy of the transition period.

It would be a good thing if our Marxist economists were to appoint a special group to examine the problems of the economy of the transition period in the new way in which they are presented at the present stage of development.

Pravda, No. 309,
December 29, 1929

Concerning the Policy of Eliminating the Kulaks as a Class

The article, "The Elimination of the Kulaks as a Class," in No. 16 of *Krasnaya Zvezda*[82] is undeniably correct in the main, but it contains two inaccuracies of formulation. It seems to me that these inaccuracies must be corrected.

1. The article says:

> "In the restoration period, we conducted a policy of restricting the capitalist elements of town and country. With the inauguration of the reconstruction period, we passed from the policy of restricting to the policy of ousting them."

This statement is incorrect. The policy of restricting the capitalist elements and the policy of ousting them are not two different policies. They are one and the same policy. Ousting the capitalist elements in the countryside is an inevitable result and *component* part of the policy of restricting the capitalist elements, the policy of restricting the kulaks' exploiting tendencies. Ousting the capitalist *elements* in the countryside must not be regarded as equivalent to ousting the kulaks as a *class*. Ousting the capitalist elements in the countryside means ousting and overcoming *individual sections* of the kulaks, those unable to bear the burden of taxation and the Soviet government's system of restrictive measures. Naturally, the policy of restricting the kulaks' exploiting tendencies, the policy of restricting the capitalist elements in the countryside, cannot but lead to the ousting of individual sections of the kulaks. Consequently, ousting individual sections of the kulaks cannot be regarded otherwise than as an inevitable result and a component part of the policy of restricting the capitalist elements in the countryside.

We pursued this policy not only in the restoration period, but also in the period of reconstruction, and in the period following the Fifteenth Congress (December 1927), and in the period of the Sixteenth Conference of our Party (April 1929), as well as after that conference right down to the summer of 1929, when the phase of complete collectivisation set in, and when the *change* to the policy of *eliminating* the kulaks as a *class* began.

If one examines the most important documents of our Party from, say, the Fourteenth Congress in December 1925 (see the resolution on the report of the Central Committee[33]) to the Sixteenth Conference in April 1929 (see the resolution on "Ways and Means of Promoting Agriculture"[34]), one cannot fail to notice that the thesis about "restricting the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks," or about "restricting the growth of capitalism in the countryside" always goes *side by side* with the thesis about "ousting the capitalist elements in the countryside," about "overcoming the capitalist elements in the countryside."

What does that mean?

It means that the Party *does not separate* the ousting of the capitalist elements in the countryside from the policy of restricting the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks, from the policy of restricting the capitalist elements in the countryside.

Both the Fifteenth Party Congress and the Sixteenth Conference stood wholeheartedly for the policy of "restricting the exploiting proclivities of the agricultural bourgeoisie" (Fifteenth Congress resolution on "Work in the Countryside"[35]), for the policy of "adopting new measures to restrict the development of capitalism in the countryside" (*ibid.*), for the policy of "resolutely restricting the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks" (see Fifteenth Congress resolution on the five-year plan[36]), for the policy of "an offensive against the kulaks" in the sense of "passing to further, more systematic and persistent restriction of the kulak and private trader" (*ibid.*), for the policy of "still more resolute economic ousting" of the "elements of private-capitalist economy" in town and country (see Fifteenth Congress resolution on the report of the Central Committee[37]).

Consequently, a) the author of the above-mentioned article is wrong in depicting the policy of restricting the capitalist elements and the policy of ousting them as two different policies. The facts show that what we have here is one general policy of restricting capitalism, a component part and result of which is the ousting of individual sections of the kulaks.

Consequently, b) the author of the above-mentioned article is wrong in asserting that the ousting of the capitalist elements in the countryside began only in the period of reconstruction, in the period of the Fifteenth Congress. In point of fact, the ousting took place both before the Fifteenth Congress, in the restoration period, and after the Fifteenth Congress, in the reconstruction period. In the period of the Fifteenth Congress the policy of restricting the kulaks' exploiting tendencies was only intensified by new and additional measures, as a result of which the ousting of individual sections of the kulaks was also bound to be intensified.

2. The article says:

> "The policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class entirely follows from the policy of ousting the capitalist elements, being a continuation of this policy in a new stage."

This statement is inaccurate and, therefore, untrue. Naturally, the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class could not have fallen from the skies. The way for it was prepared by the entire preceding period of restricting, and hence of ousting, the capitalist elements in the countryside. But this does not mean that it does not differ *radically* from the policy of restricting (and ousting) the capitalist elements in the countryside, that it is a *continuation* of the restriction policy. To say what our author says is to deny that there has been a *change* in the development of the countryside since the summer of 1929. To say what he does is to deny that during this period we have executed a *turn* in our Party's policy in the countryside. To say what he does is to create a certain ideological refuge for the Right elements in our Party, who are now clinging to the Fifteenth Congress decisions in opposition to the Party's *new* policy, just as at one time Frumkin clung to the Fourteenth Congress decisions in opposition to the policy of promoting collective farms and state farms.

What was the point of departure of the Fifteenth Congress in proclaiming an intensification of the policy of restricting (and ousting) the capitalist elements in the countryside? Its point of departure was that, despite this restricting of the kulaks, they, *as a class,* nevertheless were *bound to remain* for the time being. *On those grounds,* the Fifteenth Congress left in force the law on renting land, although it knew very well that it was mostly kulaks who rented land. *On those grounds,* the Fifteenth Congress left in force the law on hiring labour in the countryside, and demanded that it should be strictly observed. *On those grounds,* it was again proclaimed that dekulakisation was impermissible. Do these laws and decisions contradict the policy of *restricting* (and ousting) the capitalist elements in the countryside? Certainly not. Do these laws and decisions contradict the policy of *eliminating* the kulaks as a class? Certainly, *they do!* Consequently, these laws and decisions must now be set aside in the areas of complete collectivisation, which is spreading by leaps and bounds. Incidentally, they have already been set aside by the very progress of the collective-farm movement in the areas of complete collectivisation.

Can it, then, be affirmed that the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class is a *continuation* of the policy of restricting (and ousting) the capitalist elements in the countryside? Obviously, it cannot.

The author of the above-mentioned article forgets that the kulak class, as a class, cannot be ousted by taxation measures or any other restrictions, if this class is *allowed to retain* instruments of production and the right to free use of land, and if in our practical activity we *preserve* in the countryside the law on hiring labour, the law on renting land, and the ban on dekulakisation. The author forgets that the policy of restricting the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks enables us to count only on ousting individual sections of the kulaks, which does not contradict, but, on the contrary, presumes the *preservation* for the time being of the kulaks as a class. As a means of ousting the kulaks as a class, the policy of restricting and ousting individual sections of the kulaks is inadequate. In order to oust the kulaks as a class, the resistance of this class must be *smashed* in open battle and it must be *deprived* of the productive sources of its existence and development (free use of land, instruments of production, land-renting, right to hire labour, etc.).

That is a *turn* towards the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class. Without it, talk about ousting the kulaks as a class is empty prattle, acceptable and profitable only to the Right deviators. Without it, no substantial, let alone complete, collectivisation of the countryside is conceivable. That is well understood by our poor and middle peasants, who are smashing the kulaks and introducing complete collectivisation. That, evidently, is not yet understood by some of our comrades.

Hence, the Party's present policy in the countryside is not a *continuation* of the old policy, but a *turn* away from the old policy of *restricting* (and ousting) the capitalist elements in the countryside towards the new policy of *eliminating* the kulaks as a class.

Krasnaya Zvezda, No. 18,
January 21, 1930
Signed : *J. Stalin*

Dizzy With Success

Concerning Questions of the Collective-Farm Movement

The Soviet government's successes in the sphere of the collective-farm movement are now being spoken of by everyone. Even our enemies are forced to admit that the successes are substantial. And they really are very great.

It is a fact that by February 20 of this year 50 per cent of the peasant farms throughout the U.S.S.R. had been collectivised. That means that by February 20, 1930, we had *overfulfilled* the five-year plan of collectivisation by more than 100 per cent.

It is a fact that on February 28 of this year the collective farms had *already succeeded* in stocking upwards of 36,000,000 centners, i.e., about 220,000,000 poods, of seed for the spring sowing, which is more than 90 per cent of the plan. It must be admitted that the accumulation of 220,000,000 poods of seed by the collective farms alone—after the successful fulfilment of the grain-procurement plan—is a tremendous achievement.

What does all this show?

That a *radical turn of the countryside towards socialism may be considered as already achieved.*

There is no need to prove that these successes are of supreme importance for the fate of our country, for the whole working class, which is the directing force of our country, and, lastly, for the Party itself. To say nothing of the direct practical results, these successes are of immense value for the internal life of the Party itself, for the education of our Party. They imbue our Party with a spirit of cheerfulness and confidence in its strength. They arm the working class with confidence in the victory of our cause. They bring forward additional millions of reserves for our Party.

Hence the Party's task is: to *consolidate* the successes achieved and to *utilise* them systematically for our further advancement.

But successes have their seamy side, especially when they are attained with comparative "ease"—"unexpectedly," so to speak. Such successes sometimes induce a spirit of vanity and conceit : "We can achieve anything!", "There's nothing we can't do!" People not infrequently become intoxicated by such successes ; they become dizzy with success, lose all sense of proportion and the capacity to understand realities; they show a tendency to overrate their own strength and to underrate the strength of the enemy ; adventurist attempts are made to solve all questions of socialist construction "in a trice." In such a case, there is no room for concern to *consolidate* the successes achieved and to *utilise* them systematically for further advancement. Why should we consolidate the successes achieved when, as it is, we can dash to the full victory of socialism "in a trice": "We can achieve anything!", "There's nothing we can't do!"

Hence the Party's task is: to wage a determined struggle against these sentiments, which are dangerous and harmful to our cause, and to drive them out of the Party.

It cannot be said that these dangerous and harmful sentiments are at all widespread in the ranks of our Party. But they do exist in our Party, and there are no grounds for asserting that they will not become stronger. And if they should be allowed free scope, then there can be no doubt that the collective-farm movement will be considerably weakened and the danger of its breaking down may become a reality.

Hence the task of our press is: systematically to denounce these and similar anti-Leninist sentiments.

A few facts.

1. The successes of our collective-farm policy are due, among other things, to the fact that it rests on the *voluntary character* of the collective-farm movement and on *taking into account the diversity of conditions* in the various regions of the U.S.S.R. Collective farms must not be established by force. That would be foolish and reactionary. The collective-farm movement must rest on the active support of the main mass of the peasantry. Examples of the formation of collective farms in the developed areas must not be mechanically transplanted to underdeveloped areas. That would be foolish and reactionary. Such a "policy" would discredit the collectivisation idea at one stroke. In determining the speed and methods of collective-farm development,

careful consideration must be given to the diversity of conditions in the various regions of the U.S.S.R.

Our grain-growing areas are ahead of all others in the collective-farm movement. Why is this ?

Firstly, because in these areas we have the largest number of already firmly-established state farms and collective farms, thanks to which the peasants have had the opportunity to convince themselves of the power and importance of the new technical equipment, of the power and importance of the new, collective organisation of farming.

Secondly, because these areas have had a two-years' schooling in the fight against the kulaks during the grain-procurement campaigns, and this could not but facilitate the development of the collective-farm movement.

Lastly, because these areas in recent years have been extensively supplied with the best cadres from the industrial centres.

Can it be said that these especially favourable conditions also exist in other areas, the consuming areas, for example, such as our northern regions, or in areas where there are still backward nationalities, such as Turkestan, say?

No, it cannot be said.

Clearly, the principle of taking into account the diversity of conditions in the various regions of the U.S.S.R. is, together with the voluntary principle, one of the most important prerequisites for a sound collective-farm movement.

But what actually happens sometimes? Can it be said that the voluntary principle and the principle of taking local peculiarities into account are not violated in a number of areas? No, that cannot be said, unfortunately. We know, for example, that in a number of the northern areas of the consuming zone, where conditions for the immediate organisation of collective farms are comparatively less favourable than in the grain-growing areas, attempts are not infrequently made to *replace* preparatory work for the organisation of collective farms by bureaucratic decreeing of the collective-farm movement, paper resolutions on the growth of collective farms, organisation of collective farms on paper—collective farms which have as yet no reality, but whose "existence" is proclaimed in a heap of boastful resolutions.

Or take certain areas of Turkestan, where conditions for the immediate organisation of collective farms are even less favourable than in the northern regions of the consuming zone. We know that in a number of areas of Turkestan there have already been attempts to "overtake and outstrip" the advanced areas of the U.S.S.R. by threatening to use armed force, by threatening that peasants who are not yet ready to join the collective farms will be deprived of irrigation water and manufactured goods.

What can there be in common between this Sergeant Prishibeyev "policy" and the Party's policy of relying on the voluntary principle and of taking local peculiarities into account in collective-farm development? Clearly, there is not and cannot be anything in common between them.

Who benefits by these distortions, this bureaucratic decreeing of the collective-farm movement, these unworthy threats against the peasants? Nobody, except our enemies!

What may these distortions lead to ? To strengthening our enemies and to discrediting the idea of the collective-farm movement.

Is it not clear that the authors of these distortions, who imagine themselves to be "Lefts," are in reality bringing grist to the mill of Right opportunism?

2. One of the greatest merits of our Party's political strategy is that it is able at any given moment to pick out the *main link* in the movement, by grasping which the Party draws the whole chain towards one common goal in order to achieve the solution of the problem. Can it be said that the Party has already picked out the main link of the collective-farm movement in the system of collective-farm development? Yes, this can and should be said.

What is this chief link ?

Is it, perhaps, *association for joint cultivation* of the land? No, it is not that. Associations for joint cultivation of the land, in which the means of production are not yet socialised, are already a past stage of the collective-farm movement.

Is it, perhaps, the *agricultural commune?* No, it is not that. Communes are still of isolated occurrence in the collective-farm movement. The conditions are not yet ripe for agricultural communes—in which not only production, but also distribution is socialised—to be the *predominant* form.

The main link of the collective-farm movement, its *predomi-*

nant form at the present moment, the link which has to be grasped now, is the *agricultural artel.*

In the *agricultural artel,* the basic means of production, primarily for grain-farming—labour, use of the land, machines and other implements, draught animals and farm buildings—are socialised. In the artel, the household plots (small vegetable gardens, small orchards), the dwelling houses, a part of the dairy cattle, small livestock, poultry, etc., are *not socialised.*

The artel is the *main link of the collective-farm movement* because it is the form best adapted for solving the grain problem. And the grain problem is the *main link in the whole system of agriculture* because, if it is not solved, it will be impossible to solve either the problem of stock-breeding (small and large), or the problem of the industrial and special crops that provide the principal raw materials for industry. That is why the agricultural artel is the main link in the system of the collective-farm movement at the present moment.

That is the point of departure of the "Model Rules" for collective farms, the final text of which is published today.*

And that should be the point of departure of our Party and Soviet workers, one of whose duties it is to make a thorough study of these Rules and to carry them out down to the last detail.

Such is the line of the Party at the present moment.

Can it be said that this line of the Party is being carried out without violation or distortion? No, it cannot, unfortunately. We know that in a number of areas of the U.S.S.R., where the struggle for the existence of the collective farms is still far from over, and where artels are not yet consolidated, attempts are being made to skip the artel framework and to leap straight away into the agricultural commune. The artel is still not consolidated, but they are already "socialising" dwelling houses, small livestock and poultry; moreover, this "socialisation" is degenerating into bureaucratic decreeing on paper, because the conditions which would make such socialisation necessary do not yet exist. One might think that the grain problem has already been solved in the collective farms, that it is already a past stage, that the principal task at the present moment is not solution of the grain problem, but solution of the problem of livestock and poultry-breeding.

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* *Pravda,* March 2, 1930.

Who, we may ask, benefits from this blockheaded "work" of lumping together different forms of the collective-farm movement? Who benefits from this running too far ahead, which is stupid and harmful to our cause? Irritating the collective-farm peasant by "socialising" dwelling houses, all dairy cattle, all small livestock and poultry, when the grain problem is still *unsolved*, when the artel form of collective farming is *not yet consolidated*—is it not obvious that such a "policy" can be to the satisfaction and advantage only of our sworn enemies?

One such overzealous "socialiser" even goes so far as to issue an order to an artel containing the following instructions: "within three days, register all the poultry of every household," establish posts of special "commanders" for registration and supervison; "occupy the key positions in the artel"; "command the socialist battle without quitting your posts" and—of course—get a tight grip on the whole life of the artel.

What is this—a policy of directing the collective farms, or a policy of *disrupting* and *discrediting* them?

I say nothing of those "revolutionaries"—save the mark!—who *begin* the work of organising artels by removing the bells from the churches. Just imagine, removing the church bells—how r-r-revolutionary!

How could there have arisen in our midst such blockheaded exercises in "socialisation," such ludicrous attempts to overleap oneself, attempts which aim at bypassing classes and the class struggle, and which in fact bring grist to the mill of our class enemies?

They could have arisen only in the atmosphere of our "easy" and "unexpected" successes on the front of collective-farm development.

They could have arisen only as a result of the blockheaded belief of a section of our Party: "We can achieve anything!", "There's nothing we can't do!"

They could have arisen only because some of our comrades have become dizzy with success and for the moment have lost clearness of mind and sobriety of vision.

To correct the line of our work in the sphere of collective-farm development, *we must put an end to these sentiments.*

That is now one of the immediate tasks of the Party.

The art of leadership is a serious matter. One must not lag behind the movement, because to do so is to lose contact with the masses. But neither must one run too far ahead, because to run too far ahead is to lose the masses and to isolate oneself. He who wants to lead a movement and at the same time keep in touch with the vast masses must wage a fight on two fronts—against those who lag behind and against those who run too far ahead.

Our Party is strong and invincible because, when leading a movement, it is able to preserve and multiply its contacts with the vast masses of the workers and peasants.

Pravda, No. 60,
March 2, 1930
Signed : *J. Stalin*

Reply to Collective-Farm Comrades

It is evident from the press that Stalin's article, "Dizzy With Success,"* and the decision adopted by the Central Committee on "The Fight Against Distortions of the Party Line in the Collective-Farm Movement"[38] have evoked numerous comments among practical workers in the collective-farm movement. In this connection, I have received lately a number of letters from collective-farm comrades asking for replies to questions raised in them. It was my duty to reply to these letters in private correspondence. But this proved impossible, because more than half the letters contained no indication of the addresses of their writers (they had forgotten to give them). Yet the questions touched upon in the letters are of immense political interest for all our comrades. Moreover, I could not, of course, leave unanswered those comrades who forgot to give their addresses. I am therefore obliged to reply to the letters of the collective-farm comrades publicly, that is, through the press, extracting from them all the questions requiring to be dealt with. I do this all the more readily as I have a direct decision of the Central Committee on this subject.

First question. What is the *root* of the errors in the peasant question?

Reply. A wrong approach to the middle peasant. Resort to coercion in economic relations with the middle peasant. Forgetfulness of the fact that the economic bond with the masses of the middle peasants must be built not on the basis of coercive measures, but on the basis of agreement with the middle peasant, of alliance with him. Forgetfulness of the fact that the basis of the collective-farm movement at the present moment is an alliance of the working class and poor peasantry with the middle peasant against capitalism in general, against the kulaks in particular.

As long as the offensive against the kulak was waged in a united front with the middle peasant, all went well. But when some of our comrades became intoxicated with success and began imperceptibly to slip from the path of an offensive against the kulaks on to the path of a struggle against the middle peasant, when, in pursuit of high collectivisation percentages, they began to apply coercion to the middle peasant, depriving him of the suffrage, "dekulakising" and expropriating him, the offensive began to assume a distorted form and the united front with the middle peasant to be undermined, and, naturally, the kulak obtained an opportunity of trying to rise to his feet again.

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* See also pages 177-183.

It has been forgotten that coercion, which is necessary and useful in the fight against our class enemies, is impermissible and disastrous when applied to the middle peasant, who is our ally.

It has been forgotten that cavalry charges, which are necessary and useful for accomplishing tasks of a military character, are unsuitable and disastrous for accomplishing the tasks of collective-farm development, which, moreover, is being organised in alliance with the middle peasant.

That is the root of the errors in the peasant question.

Here is what Lenin says about economic relations with the middle peasant:

> "Most of all, we must take as our basis the truth that here, by the very nature of the case, nothing can be achieved by methods of coercion. Here the economic task is an entirely different one. Here there is not that top section which can be cut away, while leaving the whole foundation and the whole building intact. That top section, which in the town was represented by the capitalists, does not exist here. *To apply coercion here would ruin the whole matter. . . . Nothing could be more stupid than the very idea of coercion in the sphere of the economic relations of the middle peasant*" (Vol. XXIV, p. 168).

Further:

> "*The use of coercion against the middle peasantry would do very great harm.* This stratum is a numerous one, many millions strong. Even in Europe—where it nowhere attains to such strength, where technology and culture, urban life, railways, are immensely developed, and where it would be easiest of all to contemplate its use—nobody, not a single one of the most revolutionary Socialists, has ever proposed the use of coercive measures against the middle peasantry" (Vol. XXIV, p. 167).

That is clear, I think.

Second question. What are the chief errors in the collective-farm movement?

Reply. There are, at least, three such errors.

1) In building collective farms, Lenin's voluntary principle has been violated. The basic directives of the Party and the Model Rules of the Agricultural Artel about the voluntary character of collective-farm development have been violated.

Leninism teaches that the peasants must be brought to adopt collective farming voluntarily, by convincing them of the advantages of socially-conducted collective farming over individual farming. Leninism teaches that the peasants can be convinced of the advantages of collective farming only if it is *demonstrated* and *proved* to them in actual fact and by experience that collective farming is better than individual farming, that it is more profitable than individual farming and that it offers both poor and middle peasant a way out of poverty and want. Leninism teaches that, without these conditions, collective farms cannot be stable. Leninism teaches that any attempt to impose collective farming by force, any attempt to establish collective farms by compulsion can only have adverse results, can only repel the peasants from the collective-farm movement.

And, indeed, as long as this basic rule was observed, the collective-farm movement registered success after success. But some of our comrades, intoxicated with success, began to neglect this rule, began to display excessive haste and, in their pursuit of high collectivisation percentages, began to establish collective farms by means of compulsion. It is not surprising that the adverse results of such a "policy" soon showed themselves. The collective farms which had sprung up so rapidly began to melt away just as rapidly, and a section of the peasantry, who only yesterday had had the greatest confidence in the collective farms, began to turn away from them.

That is the first and chief error in the collective-farm movement.

Here is what Lenin says concerning the voluntary principle of building collective farms:

> "Our task now is to pass to *socially-conducted* cultivation of the land, to *large-scale* farming in common. But there can be no compulsion by the Soviet government; there is no law that makes it compulsory. The agricultural *commune* is founded *voluntarily*, the passing to *socially-conducted cultivation* of the land can only be *voluntary*; there cannot be the slightest compulsion by the workers' and peasants' government in this

> respect, nor does the law allow it. If any of you has observed such compulsion, you must know that it is an abuse, a violation of the law, which we are doing our utmost to correct, and shall correct"* (Vol. XXIV, p. 43).

Further:

> "Only if we succeed in practice in *showing* the peasants the advantages of common, collective, co-operative, artel cultivation of the soil, only if we succeed in helping the peasant by means of co-operative, artel farming, will the working class, which holds state power in its hands, actually prove to the peasant the correctness of its policy and actually secure the real and durable following of the vast masses of the peasantry. Hence the importance of every kind of measure to promote co-operative, artel agriculture can hardly be overestimated. We have millions of individual farms in our country, scattered and dispersed in the depths of the countryside.... Only when it is *proved in practice, by experience* easily understood by the peasants, that the transition to the co-operative, artel form of agriculture is essential and possible, only then shall we be entitled to say that in this vast peasant country, Russia, an important step towards socialist agriculture has been taken" (Vol. XXIV, pp. 579-80).

Lastly, one more passage from the works of Lenin:

> "While encouraging co-operative associations of all kinds, and equally agricultural communes of middle peasants, the representatives of the Soviet government must not allow their formation to involve *the slightest compulsion.* Only such associations are valuable as are constituted by the peasants themselves on their free initiative, and the advantages of which have been verified by them in practice. *Excessive haste in this matter is harmful,* because it is only capable of strengthening the middle peasants' prejudice against innovations. Representatives of the Soviet government who take the liberty of resorting even to indirect, to say nothing of direct, compulsion with a view to uniting the peasants in communes must be called to the strictest account and removed from work in the countryside"* (Vol. XXIV, p. 174).

That is clear, I think.

It scarcely needs proof that the Party will carry out these injunctions of Lenin's with the utmost stringency.

2) In building collective farms, Lenin's principle of taking into account the diversity of conditions in the various regions of the U.S.S.R. has been violated. It has been forgotten that in the U.S.S.R. there are the most diverse regions, with differing forms of economy and levels of culture. It has been forgotten that

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

among them there are advanced regions, average regions and backward regions. It has been forgotten that rates of progress of the collective-farm movement and the methods of collective-farm development *cannot be uniform* in these far from uniform regions.

> "It would be a mistake," Lenin says, "if we were simply to write stereotyped decrees for all parts of Russia, if the Bolshevik-Communists, Soviet officials in the Ukraine and the Don region, began extending them wholesale and without discrimination to other regions" ...for "under no circumstances do we bind ourselves to a single stereotyped pattern, or decide once and for all that our experience, the experience of Central Russia, can be transplanted in its entirety to all the border regions" (Vol. XXIV, pp. 125-26).

Lenin further says:

> "To stereotype Central Russia, the Ukraine and Siberia, to make them conform to a particular stereotyped pattern, would be the greatest folly" (Vol. XXVI, p. 243).

Lastly, Lenin makes it obligatory for the Caucasian Communists

> "to understand *the specific character of their position, of the position of their republics, as distinct from the position and conditions of the R.S.F.S.R.; to understand the necessity of not copying our tactics, but of thoughtfully modifying them in accordance with the difference in the concrete conditions*" (Vol. XXVI, p. 191).

That is clear, I think.

On the basis of these injunctions of Lenin, the Central Committee of our Party, in its decision on "The Rate of Collectivisation" (see *Pravda,* January 6, 1930[39]), divided the regions of the U.S.S.R., as regards the rate of collectivisation, into three groups, of which the North Caucasus, the Middle Volga and the Lower Volga may in the main complete collectivisation by the spring of 1931, other grain-growing regions (the Ukraine, the Central Black Earth region, Siberia, the Urals, Kazakhstan, etc.) by the spring of 1932, while the remaining regions may extend collectivisation to the end of the five-year plan period, that is, until 1933.

But what actually happened? It turned out that some of our comrades, intoxicated by the first successes of the collective-farm movement, cheerfully forgot both Lenin's injunctions and the Central Committee's decisions. The Moscow Region, in its feverish pursuit of inflated collectivisation figures, began to orientate its officials towards completing collectivisation in the spring of 1930, although it had no less than three years at its disposal (to the end of 1932). The Central Black Earth region, not desiring to "lag behind the others," began to orientate its officials towards completing collectivisation by the first half of 1930, although it had no less than two years at its disposal (to the end of 1931). And the Transcaucasians and Turkestanians, in their eagerness to "overtake and outstrip" the advanced regions, began to orientate themselves on completing collectivisation "at the earliest," although they had fully four years at their disposal (to the end of 1933).

Naturally, with such a quick-fire "tempo" of collectivisation, the areas less prepared for the collective-farm movement, in their eagerness to "outstrip" the better prepared areas, found themselves obliged to resort to strong administrative pressure, endeavouring to compensate the missing factors needed for a rapid rate of progress of the collective-farm movement by their own administrative ardour. The consequences are known. Everyone knows of the muddle which resulted in these areas, and which had to be straightened out by the interference of the Central Committee.

That is the second error in the collective-farm movement.

3) In building collective farms, Lenin's principle that it is impermissible to skip over an uncompleted form of movement was violated. Also violated was Lenin's principle of not running ahead of the development of the masses, of not decreeing the movement of the masses, of not becoming divorced from the masses, but of moving together with the masses and impelling them forward, bringing them to our slogans and helping them to convince themselves of the correctness of our slogans through their own experience.

> "When the Petrograd proletariat and the soldiers of the Petrograd garrison took power," says Lenin, "they fully realised that our constructive work in the countryside would encounter great difficulties; that there it was necessary to proceed more gradually; that to *attempt to introduce collective cultivation of the land by decrees,* by legislation, would be the *height of folly*; that an insignificant number of enlightened peasants might agree to this, but that the vast majority of the peasants had no such object in view. We, therefore, confined ourselves to what was absolutely essential in the interests of the development of the revolution: in no case

to run ahead of the development of the masses, but to wait until, as a result of their own experience and their own struggle, a progressive movement grew up"* (Vol. XXIII, p. 252).

Proceeding from these injunctions of Lenin, the Central Committee, in its decision on "The Rate of Collectivisation" (see *Pravda,* January 6, 1930), laid down that:

a) the chief form of the collective-farm movement at the present moment is the agricultural artel,

b) in view of this, it is necessary to draw up model rules for the agricultural artel, as the chief form of the collective-farm movement,

c) "decreeing" the collective-farm movement from above and "playing at collectivisation" must not be allowed in our practical work.

That means that at the present time we must steer our course not towards the commune, but towards the agricultural artel, as the chief form of collective-farm development ; that we must not allow skipping over the agricultural artel to the commune ; that "decreeing" of collective farms and "playing at collective farms" must not be substituted for the mass movement of the peasants in favour of collective farms.

That is clear, I think.

But what actually happened? It turned out that some of our comrades, intoxicated by the first successes of the collective-farm movement, cheerfully forgot both Lenin's injunctions and the C.C.'s decision. Instead of organising a mass movement in favour of the agricultural artel, these comrades began to "transfer" the individual peasants straight to the rules of the commune. Instead of consolidating the artel form of the movement, they began compulsorily "socialising" small livestock, poultry, non-commercial dairy cattle and dwelling houses.

The results of this haste, which is impermissible for a Leninist, are now known to all. As a rule, of course, they failed to create stable communes. But, on the other hand, they lost control of a number of agricultural artels. True, "good" resolutions remained. But what is the use of them?

That is the third error in the collective-farm movement.

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

Third question. How could these errors have arisen, and how must the Party correct them?

Reply. They arose because of our rapid successes in the collective-farm movement. Success sometimes turns people's heads. It not infrequently gives rise to extreme vanity and conceit. That may very easily happen to representatives of a party which is in power, especially in the case of a party like ours, whose strength and prestige are almost immeasurable. Here, instances of communist vainglory, which Lenin combated so vehemently, are quite possible. Here, belief in the omnipotence of decrees, resolutions and orders is quite possible. Here, there is a real danger of the Party's revolutionary measures being converted into empty bureaucratic decreeing by individual representatives of the Party in one corner or another of our boundless country. I have in mind not only local officials, but also individual regional officials, and even individual members of the Central Committee.

> "Communist vainglory," says Lenin, "means that a man, who is a member of the Communist Party, and has not yet been purged from it, imagines that he can solve all his problems by issuing communist decrees" (Vol. XXVII, pp. 50-51).

That is the soil from which sprang the errors in the collective-farm movement, the distortions of the Party line in collective-farm development.

Wherein lies the danger of these errors and distortions, if they are persisted in, if they are not eliminated rapidly and completely?

The danger here lies in the fact that these errors lead us straight to the discrediting of the collective-farm movement, to dissension in our relations with the middle peasants, to the disorganisation of the poor peasants, to confusion in our ranks, to the weakening of all our work of socialist construction, to the revival of the kulaks.

In short, these errors have a tendency to push us from the path of strengthening the alliance with the main mass of the peasantry, of strengthening the proletarian dictatorship, on to the path of a rupture with these masses, on to the path of undermining the proletarian dictatorship.

This danger was already in evidence in the latter half of February, at the time when a section of our comrades, dazzled by the earlier successes, went off at a gallop from the Leninist path.

The Central Committee of the Party was alive to this danger and intervened without delay, instructing Stalin to issue a warning to the over-presumptuous comrades in a special article on the collective-farm movement. There are some who think that the article, "Dizzy With Success," was the result of Stalin's personal initiative. That, of course, is nonsense. It is not in order that personal initiative in a matter like this may be taken by anyone, whoever he might be, that we have a Central Committee. It was a reconnaissance-in-depth by the C.C. And when the depth and extent of the errors were ascertained, the C.C. lost no time in striking at these errors with all the strength of its authority, by publishing its well-known resolution of March 15, 1930.

It is with difficulty that people who in their frantic course are dashing headlong towards the abyss can be halted and turned back to the right path. But our C.C. is called the Central Committee of the Leninist party precisely because it is able to overcome difficulties even greater than these. And, in the main, it has already overcome these difficulties.

It is difficult in cases like this for whole detachments of the Party to stop in their course, to turn back in time to the right path and to re-form their ranks on the march. But our Party is called Lenin's party precisely because it is sufficiently flexible to overcome such difficulties. And, in the main, it has already overcome these difficulties.

The chief thing here is to have the courage to acknowledge one's errors and the moral strength to eliminate them as quickly as possible. Fear of acknowledging one's errors after being intoxicated by recent successes, fear of self-criticism, reluctance to correct one's errors rapidly and resolutely—that is the chief difficulty. One has only to overcome this difficulty, one has only to cast aside inflated numerical targets and bureaucratic maximalism, one has only to transfer one's attention to the tasks of building the collective farms organisationally and economically, and not a trace of the errors will remain. There is no reason to doubt that, in the main, the Party has already overcome this dangerous difficulty.

"All revolutionary parties which have hitherto perished," Lenin says, "did so because they *grew conceited,* failed to see where their strength lay, *and feared to speak of their weaknesses.* But we shall not perish, for we do not fear to speak of our weaknesses and shall learn to overcome them"* (Vol. XXVII, pp. 260-61).

These words of Lenin must not be forgotten.

Fourth question. Is not the fight against distortions of the Party line a step backward, a retreat?

Reply. Of course not! This can be said to be a retreat only by people who consider persistence in errors and distortions an advance, and the fight against errors, a retreat. Advancing by piling up errors and distortions!—a fine "advance," there's no gainsaying. . . .

We have put forward the agricultural artel as the principal form of the collective-farm movement at the present moment, and have provided appropriate model rules to serve as a guide in the work of collective-farm development. Are we retreating from that? Of course not!

We have put forward consolidation of the production bond of the working class and the poor peasants with the middle peasants as the basis of the collective-farm movement at the present moment. Are we retreating from that? Of course not!

We have put forward the slogan of eliminating the kulaks as a class as the chief slogan of our practical work in the countryside at the present moment. Are we retreating from that? Of course not!

Already in January 1930 we adopted a definite rate of collectivisation of agriculture in the U.S.S.R., dividing the regions of the U.S.S.R. into a number of groups, and fixing its own special rate for each group. Are we retreating from that? Of course not!

How, then, can it be said that the Party is "retreating"?

We want people who have committed errors and distortions to retreat from their errors. We want blockheads to retreat from their blockheadedness to the position of Leninism. We want this, because only then will it be possible to continue the *real* offensive against our class enemies. Does this mean that we are taking a step backwards? Of course not! It only means that we want to carry out a *proper* offensive, and not blockheaded playing at an offensive.

Is it not obvious that only cranks and "Left" distorters can consider this stand of the Party a retreat?

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

People who talk about a retreat fail to understand at least two things.

a) They do not know the laws of an offensive. They do not understand that an offensive *without consolidating* captured positions is an offensive that is doomed to failure.

When may an offensive—in the military sphere, say—be successful ? When you do not confine yourself to advancing headlong, but endeavour at the same time to *consolidate* the positions captured, *regroup* your forces in conformity with changing conditions, *move up* the rear services, and *bring up* the reserves. Why is all this necessary ? In order to guarantee yourself against surprises, to liquidate any break-throughs, against which no offensive is guaranteed, and thus pave the way for the complete rout of the enemy. The mistake made by the Polish army in 1920, if we consider only the military side of the matter, was that it ignored this rule. That, incidentally, explains why, after having dashed headlong to Kiev, it was then forced to make just as headlong a retreat to Warsaw. The mistake made by the Soviet army in 1920, if again we consider only the military side of the matter, was that it duplicated the mistake of the Poles in its advance on Warsaw.

The same must be said about the laws of an offensive on the front of the class struggle. It is impossible to conduct a successful offensive with the object of annihilating the class enemies, *without consolidating* captured positions, *without regrouping* forces, without providing *reserves* for the front, without moving up *rear services,* and so on.

The whole point is that the blockheads do not understand the laws of an offensive. The whole point is that the Party does understand them and puts them into effect.

b) They do not understand the class nature of the offensive. They shout about an offensive. But an offensive against *which* class, and in alliance with *which* class ? We are conducting an offensive against the capitalist elements in the countryside in alliance with the middle peasant, because only such an offensive can bring us victory. But what is to be done if, owing to the misguided ardour of individual sections of the Party, the offensive begins to slide from the proper path and its sharp edge is turned against our ally, the middle peasant ? Is it just *any kind* of an offensive that we need, and not an offensive against a definite class, and in alliance with a definite class? Don Quixote also imagined he was conducting an offensive against his enemies when he attacked a windmill. But we know that he got his head broken in this offensive, if one can call it that.

Apparently, our "Left" distorters are envious of the laurels of Don Quixote.

Fifth question. Which is our chief danger, the Right or the "Left"?

Reply. Our chief danger at the present time is the Right danger. The Right danger has been, and still is, the chief danger.

Does not this thesis contradict that in the Central Committee's decision of March 15, 1930, to the effect that the errors and distortions of the "Left" distorters are now the chief hindrance to the collective-farm movement? No, it does not. The fact of the matter is that the errors of the "Left" distorters in regard to the collective-farm movement are such as create a favourable situation for the strengthening and consolidation of the Right deviation in the Party. Why? Because these errors present the Party's line in a false light—consequently, they make it easier to discredit the Party, and therefore they facilitate the struggle of the Right elements against the Party's leadership. Discrediting the Party leadership is just that elementary ground on which alone the struggle of the Right deviators against the Party can be waged. This ground is provided for the Right deviators by the "Left" distorters, by their errors and distortions. Therefore, if we are to fight successfully against Right opportunism, we must overcome the errors of the "Left" opportunists. Objectively, the "Left" distorters are allies of the Right deviators.

Such is the peculiar connection between "Left" opportunism and Right deviationism.

It is this connection that explains the fact that some of the "Lefts" so often suggest a bloc with the Rights. This, too, explains the peculiar phenomenon that a section of the "Lefts," who only yesterday were "executing" a dashing offensive and trying to collectivise the U.S.S.R. in a matter of two or three weeks, are today lapsing into passivity, losing heart and effectively surrendering the field to the Right deviators, thus pursuing a line of real retreat (without quotation marks!) in face of the kulaks.

The specific feature of the present moment is that a fight against the errors of the "Left" distorters is a pre-condition for a successful fight against Right opportunism and a distinctive form of this fight.

Sixth question. How is the exodus of a section of the peasants from the collective farms to be assessed?

Reply. The exodus of a section of the peasants signifies that of late a certain number of unsound collective farms were formed which are now being cleansed of their unstable elements. That means that sham collective farms will disappear, while the sound ones will remain and grow stronger. I consider this a perfectly normal thing. Some comrades are driven to despair by it, give way to panic, and convulsively clutch at inflated collectivisation percentages. Others gloat over it and prophesy the "collapse" of the collective-farm movement. Both are cruelly mistaken. Both are far removed from a Marxist understanding of the nature of the collective-farm movement.

Primarily, it is so-called dead souls that are withdrawing from the collective farms. It is not even a withdrawal but rather the revelation of a vacuum. Do we need dead souls? Of course not. I think that the North Caucasians and the Ukrainians are acting quite rightly in dissolving collective farms with dead souls and in organising really live and really stable collective farms. The collective-farm movement will only benefit from this.

Secondly, it is alien elements, which are definitely hostile to our cause, that are withdrawing. It is obvious that the sooner such elements are ejected, the better it will be for the collective-farm movement.

Lastly, it is vacillating elements, which cannot be called either alien elements or dead souls, that are withdrawing. These are peasants whom *today* we have not yet succeeded in convincing of the rightness of our cause, but whom we shall certainly convince *tomorrow*. The withdrawal of such peasants is a serious, although temporary, loss to the collective-farm movement. Consequently, one of the most urgent tasks of the collective-farm movement now is to fight for the vacillating elements in the collective farms.

It follows that the exodus of a section of the peasants from the collective farms is not entirely a bad thing. It follows that, inasmuch as this exodus relieves the collective farms of dead souls and definitely alien elements, it is the sign of a beneficent process making the collective farms healthier and stronger.

A month ago it was estimated that collectivisation in the grain-growing regions amounted to over 60 per cent. It is now clear that, as regards genuine and more or less stable collective farms, that figure was definitely exaggerated. If, after the exodus of a section of the peasants, the collective-farm movement is consolidated at 40 per cent collectivisation in the grain-growing regions—and that is certainly feasible—it will be a very great achievement for the collective-farm movement at the present moment. I take an average figure for the grain-growing regions, although I am well aware that we have individual areas of complete collectivisation where the figure is 80-90 per cent. Forty per cent collectivisation in the grain-growing regions means that by the spring of 1930 we shall have succeeded in fulfilling the original five-year plan of collectivisation *twice over*.

Who will venture to deny the *decisive* character of this *historic* achievement in the socialist development of the U.S.S.R. ?

Seventh question. Are the vacillating peasants acting rightly in withdrawing from the collective farms ?

Reply. No, they are acting wrongly. In withdrawing from the collective farms they are going against their own interests, for only the collective farms offer the peasants a way out of poverty and ignorance. In withdrawing from the collective farms, they make their position worse, because they deprive themselves of those privileges and advantages which the Soviet government accords the collective farms. Errors and distortions in the collective farms are no reason for withdrawing from them. Errors must be corrected by joint effort, while remaining in the collective farms. They can be corrected the more easily as the Soviet government will fight them with might and main.

Lenin says :

> "The small-farming system under commodity production *cannot* save mankind from the poverty and oppression of the masses" (Vol. XX, p. 122).

Lenin says :

> "There is no escape from poverty for the small farm" (Vol. XXIV, p. 540).

Lenin says :

> "If we continue as of old on our small farms, even as free citizens on free land, we shall still be faced with inevitable ruin" (Vol. XX, p. 417).

Lenin says :

> "Only with the help of common, artel, co-operative labour can we escape from the impasse into which the imperialist war has landed us" (Vol. XXIV, p. 537).

Lenin says :

> "We must pass to common cultivation in large model farms," for "otherwise there will be no escaping from the dislocation, from the truly desperate situation in which Russia finds itself" (Vol. XX, p, 418).

What does all that signify ?

It signifies that collective farms are the *sole* means that offer the peasants a way out of poverty and ignorance.

Clearly, peasants who withdraw from the collective farms are acting wrongly.

Lenin says :

> "You all know, of course, from all the activity of the Soviet government what *immense importance* we attach to communes, artels and all organisations generally which aim at the transformation, at gradually assisting this transformation, of small, individual peasant farming into socially-conducted, co-operative or artel farming"* (Vol. XXIV, p. 579).

Lenin says :

> "The Soviet government gave direct *preference* to communes and co-operatives by putting them *in the forefront*"* (Vol. XXIII, p. 399).

What does that mean ?

It means that the Soviet government will accord privileges and preferences to the collective farms as compared with the individual farms. It means that it will accord privileges to the collective farms as regards provision of land, as regards supply of machines, tractors, seed grain, etc., as regards tax relief, and as regards provision of credits.

Why does the Soviet government accord privileges and preferences to the collective farms ?

Because the collective farms are the only means by which the peasants can rid themselves of poverty.

Because preferential assistance to the collective farms is the most effective form of assistance to the poor and middle peasants.

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* My italics.—*J. St.*

A few days ago the Soviet government decided to *exempt* from taxation *for two years* all socially-owned draught animals in the collective farms (horses, oxen, etc.), and all cows, pigs, sheep and poultry, both those collectively owned by the collective farms and those individually owned by the collective farmers.

The Soviet government has decided, in addition, to *postpone* to the end of the year repayment of arrears on credits granted to collective farmers and to *cancel* all fines and court penalties levied prior to April 1 on peasants who have joined collective farms.

It has decided, lastly, to carry out without fail the granting of credits to collective farms in the present year to the amount of 500,000,000 rubles.

These privileges will aid the peasant collective farmers. They will aid those peasant collective farmers who have stood firm against the exodus, who have become steeled in the fight against the enemies of the collective farms, who have defended the collective farms and have held aloft the great banner of the collective-farm movement. They will aid the poor- and middle-peasant collective farmers, who now constitute the main core of our collective farms, who will strengthen and give shape to our collective farms, and who will win millions upon millions of peasants for socialism. They will aid those peasant collective farmers who now constitute the principal cadres of the collective farms, and who fully deserve to be called heroes of the collective-farm movement.

These privileges the peasants who have left the collective farms *will not receive*.

Is it not clear that peasants who withdraw from the collective farms are making a mistake?

Is it not clear that only by returning to the collective farms can they ensure receiving these privileges?

Eighth question. What is to be done with the communes? Should they not be dissolved?

Reply. No, they should not be dissolved and there is no reason for doing so. I am referring to real communes, not those existing on paper. In the grain-growing regions of the U.S.S.R. there are a number of splendid communes which deserve to be encouraged and supported. I have in mind the old communes which have withstood years of ordeal, which have become steeled in the struggle and have fully justified their existence. They should not be dissolved, but should be converted into artels.

The formation and management of communes is a complicated and difficult matter. Large and stable communes can exist and develop only if they have experienced cadres and tried and tested leaders. A hasty replacement of the rules of the artel by the rules of the commune can only repel the peasants from the collective-farm movement. Hence this matter must be approached with the utmost care and without any sort of haste. The artel is a simpler affair and more easily understood by the broad masses of the peasants. That is why at the present time the artel is the most widespread form of the collective-farm movement. Only as the agricultural artels become stronger and more firmly established can the basis be created for a mass movement of the peasants towards communes. But that will not be soon. Hence the commune, which constitutes a higher form, can become the chief link in the collective-farm movement only in the future.

Ninth question. What is to be done with the kulaks ?

Reply. So far we have spoken of the middle peasant. The middle peasant is an ally of the working class, and our policy towards him must be a friendly one. As for the kulak, that is another matter. The kulak is an enemy of the Soviet regime. There is not and cannot be peace between him and us. Our policy towards the kulaks is to eliminate them as a class. That does not mean, of course, that we can eliminate them at one stroke. But it does mean that we shall work to surround them and to eliminate them.

Here is what Lenin says about the kulaks :

> "The kulaks are most bestial, brutal and savage exploiters, who in the history of other countries have time and again restored the power of the landlords, tsars, priests and capitalists. The kulaks are more numerous than the landlords and capitalists. Nevertheless, the kulaks are a minority of the people.... These bloodsuckers have grown rich on the want suffered by the people during the war ; they have raked in thousands and hundreds of thousands of rubles by raising the prices of grain and other products. These spiders have grown fat at the expense of the peasants who have been ruined by the war, and at the expense of the hungry workers. These leeches have sucked the blood of the toilers and have grown the richer, the more the workers in the cities and factories have suffered hunger. These vampires have been gathering and are gathering the landed estates into their hands ; they keep on enslaving the poor peasants" (Vol. XXIII, pp. 206-07).

We tolerated these bloodsuckers, spiders and vampires, while pursuing a policy of restricting their exploiting tendencies. We tolerated them, because we had nothing with which to replace kulak farming, kulak production. Now we are in a position to replace, and more than replace, their farming by our collective farms and state farms. There is no reason to tolerate these spiders and bloodsuckers any longer. To tolerate any longer these spiders and bloodsuckers, who set fire to collective farms, murder collective-farm leaders and try to disrupt crop-sowing, would be going against the interests of the workers and peasants.

Hence the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class must be pursued with all the persistence and consistency of which Bolsheviks are capable.

Tenth question. What is the immediate practical task of the collective farms?

Reply. The immediate practical task of the collective farms lies in the fight for crop-sowing, for the maximum enlargement of crop areas, for proper organisation of crop-sowing.

All other tasks of the collective farms must now be adapted to the task of sowing the crops.

All other work in the collective farms must be subordinated to the work of organising the sowing of the crops.

That means that the stamina of the collective farms and of their non-Party active, the ability of the leaders and Bolshevik core of the collective farms will be tested not by resounding resolutions and high-flown greetings, but by practical performance in properly organising the crop-sowing.

But to fulfil this practical task with honour, the attention of collective-farm officials must be turned to the *economic* questions of collective-farm development, to the questions of the *internal* development of the collective farms.

Until recently, the attention of collective-farm officials was focussed on the chase for high collectivisation figures; moreover, people refused to see the difference between real collectivisation and collectivisation on paper. This infatuation for figures must now be discarded. The attention of the officials must now be concentrated on *consolidating* the collective farms, on giving them organisational *shape*, on *organising* their practical work.

Until recently, the attention of collective-farm officials was concentrated on organising large collective-farm units, so-called "giants," which not infrequently degenerated into cumbrous bureaucratic headquarters, devoid of economic roots in the villages. Consequently, real work was swamped by window-dressing. This infatuation for display must now be discarded. The attention of officials must now be concentrated on the organisational and economic work of the collective farms in the villages. When this work achieves proper success, "giants" will make their appearance of themselves.

Until recently, little attention was paid to drawing middle peasants into the work of managing the collective farms. Yet there are some remarkably fine farmers among the middle peasants, who could become excellent collective-farm executives. This defect in our work must now be eliminated. The task now is to draw the finest elements among the middle peasants into the work of managing the collective farms and to give them the opportunity to develop their abilities in this sphere.

Until recently, insufficient attention was paid to work among peasant women. The past period has shown that work among peasant women is the weakest part of our work. This defect must now be eliminated resolutely, once and for all.

Until recently, the Communists in a number of areas assumed that they could solve all the problems of collective-farm development by their own efforts. Because of this assumption, they did not pay sufficient attention to drawing non-Party people into responsible work in the collective farms, to promoting non-Party people to managerial work in the collective farms, to organising a large active of non-Party people in the collective farms. The history of our Party has proved, and the past period in collective-farm development has once more demonstrated it, that this line is radically wrong. If Communists were to shut themselves up in their shells and wall themselves off from non-Party people, they would ruin the entire work. If the Communists have succeeded in covering themselves with glory in the battles for socialism, while the enemies of communism have been beaten, it is due, among other things, to the fact that the Communists knew how to enlist the co-operation of the finest elements among the non-Party people, that they knew how to draw forces from the broad non-Party strata, how to surround their Party with a broad active of non-Party people. This defect in our work among the non-Party people must now be eliminated resolutely, once and for all.

Correcting these defects in our work, eliminating them completely, means precisely putting the *economic* work of the collective farms on sound lines.

An so:

1) Proper organisation of the crop-sowing—that is the task.

2) Concentration of attention on the economic questions of the collective-farm movement—that is the means necessary for accomplishing this task.

Pravda, No. 92,
April 3, 1930

Signed: *J. Stalin*

Speech Delivered at the First All-Union Congress of Collective-Farm Shock Brigaders[40]

February 19, 1933

Comrade collective farmers, men and women! I did not intend to speak at your congress. I did not intend to because the previous speakers have said all that had to be said—and have said it and to the point. Is it worth while speaking after that? But as you insist, and the power is in your hands (*prolonged applause*), I must submit.

I shall say a few words on various questions.

I

THE COLLECTIVE-FARM PATH IS THE ONLY RIGHT PATH

First question. Is the path which the collective-farm peasantry has taken the right path; is the path of collective farming the right one?

That is not an idle question. You shock brigaders of the collective farms evidently have no doubt that the collective farms are on the right path. Possibly, for that reason, the question will seem superfluous to you. But not all peasants think as you do. There are still not a few among the peasants, even among the collective farmers, who have doubts as to whether the collective-farm path is the right one. And there is nothing surprising about it.

Indeed, for hundreds of years people have lived in the old way, have followed the old path, have bent their backs to the kulaks and landlords, to the usurers and speculators. It cannot be said that that old, capitalist path was approved by the peasants. But that old path was a beaten path, the customary path, and no one had actually proved that it was possible to live in a different way, in a better way. The more so as in all bourgeois countries people are still living in the old way. . . . And suddenly the Bolsheviks break in on this old stagnant life, break in like a storm and say: It is time to abandon the old path, it is time to begin living in a new way, in the collective-farm way; it is time to begin living not as everyone lives in bourgeois countries, but in a new way, co-operatively. But what is this new life—who can tell? May it not turn out to be worse than the old life? At all events, the new path is not the customary path, it is not a beaten path, not yet a fully explored path. Would it not be better to keep to the old path? Would it not be better to wait a little before embarking on the new, collective-farm path? Is it worth while taking the risk?

These are the doubts that are now troubling one section of the labouring peasantry.

Ought we not to dispel these doubts? Ought we not to bring these doubts out into the light of day and show what they are worth? Clearly, we ought to.

Hence, the question I have just put cannot be described as an idle one.

And so, is the path which the collective-farm peasantry has taken the right one?

Some comrades think that the transition to the new path, to the collective-farm path, started in our country three years ago. This is only partly true. Of course, the development of collective farms on a mass scale started in our country three years ago. The transition, as we know, was marked by the routing of the kulaks and by a movement among the vast masses of the poor and middle peasantry to join the collective farms. All that is true. But in order to start this mass transition to the collective farms, certain preliminary conditions had to be available, without which, generally speaking, the mass collective-farm movement would have been inconceivable.

First of all, we had to have the Soviet power, which has helped and continues to help the peasantry to take the collective-farm path.

Secondly, it was necessary to drive out the landlords and the capitalists, to take the factories and the land away from them and declare these the property of the people.

Thirdly, it was necessary to curb the kulaks and to take machines and tractors away from them.

Fourthly, it was necessary to declare that the machines and tractors could be used only by the poor and middle peasants organised in collective farms.

Finally, it was necessary to industrialise the country, to set up a new tractor industry, to build new factories for the manufacture of agricultural machinery, in order to supply tractors and machines in abundance to the collective-fam peasantry.

Without these preliminary conditions there could have been no question of the mass transition to the collective-farm path that started three years ago.

Hence, in order to adopt the collective-farm path it was necessary first of all to accomplish the October Revolution, to overthrow the capitalists and landlords, to take the land and factories away from them and to set up a new industry.

It was with the October Revolution that the transition to the new path, to the collective-farm path, started. This transition developed with fresh force only three years ago because it was not until then that the economic results of the October Revolution made themselves fully felt, it was not until then that success was achieved in pushing forward the industrialisation of the country.

The history of nations knows not a few revolutions. But those revolutions differ from the October Revolution in that all of them were one-sided revolutions. One form of exploitation of the working people was replaced by another form of exploitation, but exploitation itself remained. One set of exploiters and oppressors was replaced by another set of exploiters and oppressors ; but exploiters and oppressors, as such, remained. Only the October Revolution set itself the aim of abolishing *all* exploitation and of eliminating *all* exploiters and oppressors.

The revolution of the slaves eliminated the slave-owners and abolished the slave form of exploitation of the toilers. But in their place it set up the serf owners and the serf form of exploitation of the toilers. One set of exploiters was replaced by another set of exploiters. Under the slave system the "law" permitted the slave-owner to kill his slaves. Under the serfdom the "law" permitted the serf owner "only" to sell his serfs.

The revolution of the peasant-serfs eliminated the serf owners and abolished the serf form of exploitation. But in their place it set up the capitalists and landlords, the capitalist and landlord form of exploitation of the toilers. One set of exploiters was replaced by another set of exploiters. Under the serf system the "law" permitted the sale of serfs. Under the capitalist system the "law" permits "only" of the toilers being doomed to unemployment and destitution, to ruin and death from starvation.

It was only our Soviet Revolution, only our October Revolution that dealt with the question, not of substituting one set of exploiters for another, not of substituting one form of exploitation for another, but of eradicating all exploitation, of eradicating all exploiters, all rich and oppressors, old and new. (*Prolonged applause.*)

That is why the October Revolution was a preliminary condition and a necessary prerequisite for the peasants' transition to the new, collective-farm path.

Did the peasants act rightly in supporting the October Revolution ? Yes, they did. They acted rightly, because the October Revolution helped them to shake off the yoke of the landlords and capitalists, the usurers and kulaks, the merchants and speculators.

But that is only one side of the question. It is all very well to drive out the oppressors, to drive out the landlords and capitalists, to curb the kulaks and speculators. But that is not enough. In order to become entirely free from the old fetters it is not enough merely to rout the exploiters, it is necessary also to build a new life—to build a life that will enable the labouring peasants to improve their material conditions and culture and make continuous progress from day to day and year to year. In order to achieve this, a new system must be set up in the countryside, the collective-farm system. That is the other side of the question.

What is the difference between the old system and the new, collective-farm system ?

Under the old system the peasants worked singly, following the ancient methods of their forefathers and using antiquated implements of labour ; they worked for the landlords and capitalists, the kulaks and speculators ; they worked and lived half-starved while they enriched others. Under the new, collective-farm system the peasants work in common, co-operatively, with the help of modern implements—tractors and agricultural machinery ; they work for themselves and their collective farms ; they live without capitalists and landlords, without kulaks and speculators ; they work with the object of raising their standard of welfare and culture from day to day. Over there, under the old system, the government is a bourgeois government, and it supports the rich against the labouring peasantry. Here, under the new, collective-farm system, the government is a workers' and peasants' government, and it supports the workers and peasants against all the rich of whatever kind. The old system leads to capitalism. The new system leads to socialism.

There you have the two paths, the capitalist path and the socialist path : the path forward—to socialism, and the path backward—to capitalism.

There are people who think that some sort of third path could be followed. This unknown third path is most eagerly clutched at by some wavering comrades who are not yet convinced that the collective-farm path is the right one. They want us to return to the old system, to return to individual farming, but without capitalists and landlords. Moreover, they "only" want us to permit the existence of the kulaks and other small capitalists as a legitimate phenomenon of our economic system. Actually, this is not a third path, but the second path—the path to capitalism. For what does it mean to return to individual farming and to restore the kulaks? It means restoring kulak bondage, restoring the exploitation of the peasantry by the kulaks and giving the kulaks power. But is it possible to restore the kulaks and at the same time to preserve the Soviet power? No, it is not possible. The restoration of the kulaks is bound to lead to the creation of a kulak power and to the liquidation of the Soviet power—hence, it is bound to lead to the formation of a bourgeois government. And the formation of a bourgeois government is bound to lead in its turn to the restoration of the landlords and capitalists, to the restoration of capitalism. The so-called third path is actually the second path, the path leading back to capitalism. Ask the peasants whether they want to restore kulak bondage, to return to capitalism, to destroy the Soviet power and restore power to the landlords and capitalists. Just ask them, and you will find out which path the majority of the labouring peasants regard as the only right path.

Hence, there are only two paths : *either* forward and uphill—

to the new, collective-farm system ; or backward and downhill—to the old kulak-capitalist system.

There is no third path.

The labouring peasants did right to reject the capitalist path and take the path of collective-farm development.

It is said that the collective-farm path is the right path, but a difficult one. That is only partly true. Of course, there are difficulties on this path. A good life cannot be obtained without effort. But the point is that main difficulties are over, and those difficulties which now confront you are not worth talking about seriously. At all events, compared with the difficulties which the workers experienced 10-15 years ago, your present difficulties, comrade collective farmers, seem mere child's play. Your speakers here have praised the workers of Leningrad, Moscow, Kharkov, and the Donbas. They said that these workers have achievements to their credit and that you, collective farmers, have far fewer achievements. It seems to me that even a certain comradely envy was apparent in the remarks of your speakers, as if to say : how good it would be if we collective-farm peasants had the same achievements as you workers of Leningrad, Moscow, the Donbas, and Kharkov. . . .

That is all very well. But do you know what these achievements cost the workers of Leningrad and Moscow ; what privations they had to endure in order finally to attain these achievements ? I could relate to you some facts from the life of the workers in 1918, when for whole weeks not a piece of bread, let alone meat or other food, was distributed to the workers. The best times were considered to be the days on which we were able to distribute to the workers in Leningrad and Moscow one-eighth of a pound of black bread each, and even that was half bran. And that lasted not merely a month or six months, but for two whole years. But the workers bore it and did not lose heart ; for they knew that better times would come and that they would achieve decisive successes. Well—you see that the workers were not mistaken. Just compare your difficulties and privations with the difficulties and privations which the workers have endured, and you will see that they are not even worth talking about seriously.

What is needed to push forward the collective-farm movement and extend collective-farm development to the utmost ?

What is needed, in the first place, is that the collective farms should have land fully secured to them and suitable for cultivation. Do you have that? Yes, you do. It is well known that the best lands have been transferred to the collective farms and have been durably secured to them. Hence, the collective farmers can cultivate and improve their land as they please without any fear that it will be taken from them and given to somebody else.

What is needed, secondly, is that the collective farmers should have at their disposal tractors and machines. Do you have them? Yes, you do. Everyone knows that our tractor works and agricultural machinery works produce primarily and mainly for the collective farms, supplying them with all modern implements.

What is needed, finally, is that the government should support the collective-farm peasants to the utmost both with men and money, and that it should prevent the last remnants of the hostile classes from disrupting the collective farms. Have you such a government? Yes, you have. It is called the Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Government. Name another country where the government supports, not the capitalists and landlords, not the kulaks and other rich, but the labouring peasants. There is not, nor has there ever been, another country like this in the world. Only here, in the Land of Soviets, does a government exist which stands solidly for the workers and collective-farm peasants, for all the working people of town and country, against all the rich and the exploiters. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Hence, you have all that is needed to extend collective-farm development and to free yourself entirely from the old fetters.

Of you only one thing is demanded—and that is to work conscientiously; to distribute collective-farm incomes according to the amount of work done; to take care of collective-farm property; to take care of the tractors and machines; to see to it that the horses are well looked after; to fulfil the assignments of your workers' and peasants' state; to consolidate the collective farms and to expel from the collective farms the kulaks and kulak agents who have wormed their way into them.

You will surely agree with me that to overcome these difficulties, i.e., to work conscientiously and to take good care of collective-farm property, is not so very difficult. The more so that you are now working, not for the rich and not for exploiters, but for yourselves, for your own collective farms.

As you see, the collective-farm path, the path of socialism, is the only right path for the labouring peasants.

II

OUR IMMEDIATE TASK—TO MAKE ALL THE COLLECTIVE FARMERS PROSPEROUS

Second question. What have we achieved on the new path, on our collective-farm path, and what do we expect to achieve within the next two or three years ?

Socialism is a good thing. A happy, socialist life is unquestionably a good thing. But all that is a matter of the future. The main question now is not what we shall achieve in the future. The main question is : what have we already achieved at present ? The peasantry has taken the collective-farm path. That is very good. But what has it achieved on this path ? What tangible results have we achieved by following the collective-farm path ?

One of our achievements is that we have helped the vast masses of the poor peasants to join the collective farms. One of our achievements is that by joining the collective farms, where they have at their disposal the best land and the finest instruments of production, the vast masses of the poor peasants have risen to the level of middle peasants. One of our achievements is that the vast masses of the poor peasants, who formerly lived in semi-starvation, have now, in the collective farms, become middle peasants, have attained material security. One of our achievements is that we have put a stop to the differentiation of the peasants into poor peasants and kulaks ; that we have routed the kulaks and have helped the poor peasants to become masters of their own labour in the collective farms, to become middle peasants.

What was the situation before the expansion of collective-farm development about four years ago ? The kulaks were growing rich and were on the upgrade. The poor peasants were becoming poorer, were sinking into ruin and falling into bondage to the kulaks. The middle peasants were trying to climb up to the kulaks, but they were continually tumbling down and swelling the ranks of the poor peasants, to the amusement of the kulaks. It is not difficult to see that the only ones to profit by this scramble were the kulaks, and perhaps, here and there, some of the well-to-do peasants. Out of every hundred households in the countryside you could count four to five kulak households, eight or ten well-to-do peasant households, forty-five to fifty middle-peasant households, and some thirty-five poor-peasant households. Hence, at the lowest estimate, thirty-five per cent of all the peasant households were poor-peasant households, compelled to bear the yoke of kulak bondage. That is apart from the economically weaker strata of the middle peasants, comprising more than half of the middle peasantry, whose condition differed little from that of the poor peasants and who were directly dependent upon the kulaks.

By the expansion of collective-farm development we have succeeded in abolishing this scramble and injustice ; we have smashed the yoke of kulak bondage, brought this vast mass of poor peasants into the collective farms, given them a secure existence there, and raised them to the level of middle peasants, able to make use of the collective-farm land, the privileges granted to collective farms, tractors and agricultural machinery.

And what does that mean ? It means that not less than 20,000,000 of the peasant population, not less than 20,000,000 poor peasants have been rescued from destitution and ruin, have been rescued from kulak bondage, and have attained material security thanks to the collective farms.

This is a great achievement, comrades. It is an achievement such as has never been known in the world before, such as no other state in the world has yet made.

There you have the practical, tangible results of collective-farm development, the results of the fact that the peasants have taken the collective-farm path.

But this is only our *first* step, our *first* achievement on the path of collective-farm development.

It would be wrong to think that we must stop at this first step, at this first achievement. No, comrades, we cannot stop at this achievement. In order to advance further and definitively consolidate the collective farms we must take a *second* step, we must secure a *new* achievement. What is this second step ? It is to raise the collective farmers, both the former poor peasants and the former middle peasants, to a still higher level. It is *to make* *all the collective farmers prosperous.*. Yes, comrades, prosperous. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Thanks to the collective farms we have succeeded in raising the poor peasants to the level of the middle peasants. That is very good. But it is not enough. We must now succeed in taking another step forward, and help all the collective farmers—both the former poor peasants and the former middle peasants—to rise to the level of prosperous peasants. This can be achieved, and we must achieve it at all costs. (*Prolonged applause.*)

We now have all that is needed to achieve this aim. At present our machines and tractors are badly utilised. Our land is not well cultivated. We need only make better use of the machines and tractors, we need only improve the cultivation of the land, to increase the quantity of our produce two-fold and three-fold. And this will be quite sufficient to convert all our collective farmers into prosperous tillers of collective-farm fields.

What was the position previously as regards the prosperous peasants? In order to become prosperous a peasant had to wrong his neighbours; he had to exploit them; to sell to them dear and buy from them cheap; to hire some labourers and thoroughly exploit them; to accumulate some capital and then, having strengthened his position, to creep into the ranks of the kulaks. This, indeed, explains why formerly, under individual farming, the prosperous peasants aroused suspicion and hatred among the poor and middle peasants. Now the position is different. And the conditions are now different, too. For collective farmers to become prosperous it is not at all necessary now that they wrong or exploit their neighbours. And besides, it is not easy to exploit anybody now; for private ownership of land and the renting of land no longer exist in our country, the machines and tractors belong to the state, and people who own capital are not in fashion in the collective farms. There was such a fashion in the past, but it is gone for ever. Only one thing is now needed for the collective farmers to become prosperous, namely, to work in the collective farms conscientiously, to make proper use of the tractors and machines, to make proper use of the draught cattle, to cultivate the land properly and to take care of the collective-farm property.

Sometimes it is said: If we are living under socialism, why do we have to toil? We toiled before and we are toiling now;

is it not time we left off toiling? Such talk is fundamentally wrong, comrades. It is the philosophy of loafers and not of honest working people. Socialism does not in the least repudiate work. On the contrary, socialism is based on work. Socialism and work are inseparable from each other.

Lenin, our great teacher, said: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." What does this mean? Against whom are Lenin's words directed? Against the exploiters, against those who do not work themselves, but compel others to work for them, and get rich at the expense of others. And against whom else? Against those who loaf and want to live at the expense of others. Socialism demands, not loafing, but that all should work conscientiously; that they should work, not for others, not for the rich and the exploiters, but for themselves, for the community. And if we work conscientiously, work for ourselves, for our collective farms, then we shall succeed in a matter of two or three years in raising all the collective farmers, both the former poor peasants and the former middle peasants, to the level of prosperous peasants, to the level of people enjoying an abundance of produce and leading a fully cultured life.

That is our immediate task. We can achieve it, and we must achieve it at all costs. (*Prolonged applause.*)

III

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS

And now permit me to make a few miscellaneous remarks.

First of all about our *Party members* in the countryside. There are Party members among you, but still more of you are non-Party people. It is very good that more non-Party people than Party members are present at this congress, because it is precisely the non-Party people that we must enlist for our work first of all. There are Communists who approach the non-Party collective farmers in a Bolshevik manner. But there are also those who plume themselves on being Party members and keep non-Party people at a distance. That is bad and harmful. The strength of the Bolsheviks, the strength of the Communists lies in the fact that they are able to rally millions of active non-Party people around our Party. We Bolsheviks would never have achieved the successes we have now achieved had we not been able to win for the Party the confidence of millions of non-Party workers and peasants. And what is needed for this? What is needed is for the Party members not to isolate themselves from the non-Party people, for the Party members not to withdraw into their Party shell, not to plume themselves on being Party members, but to heed the voice of the non-Party people, not only to teach the non-Party people, but also to learn from them.

It must not be forgotten that Party members do not drop from the skies. We must remember that all Party members were at some time non-Party people. Today a man does not belong to the Party; tomorrow he will become a Party member. What is there to get conceited about? Among us old Bolsheviks there are not a few who have been working in the Party for 20 or 30 years. But there was a time when we, too, were non-Party people. What would have happened to us 20 or 30 years ago if the Party members at that time had domineered over us and had not let us come close to the Party? Perhaps we would then have been kept away from the Party for a number of years. Yet we old Bolsheviks are not people of the least account in the world, comrades. (*Laughter, prolonged applause.*)

That is why our Party members, the present young Party members who sometimes turn up their noses at non-Party people, should remember all this, should remember that it is not conceit but modesty that is the adornment of the Bolshevik.

Now a few words about the *women*, the *women collective farmers*. The question of women in the collective farms is a big question, comrades. I know that many of you underestimate the women and even laugh at them. But that is a mistake, comrades, a serious mistake. The point is not only that women constitute half the population. Primarily, the point is that the collective-farm movement has advanced a number of remarkable and capable women to leading positions. Look at this congress, at the delegates, and you will realise that women have long ago ceased to be backward and have come into the front ranks. The women in the collective farms are a great force. To keep this force down would be criminal. It is our duty to bring the women in the collective farms forward and to make use of this force.

Of course, not so long ago, the Soviet Government had a slight misunderstanding with the women collective farmers. That was over the cow. But now this business about the cow has been settled, and the misunderstanding has been removed. (*Prolonged applause.*) We have achieved a position where the majority of the collective-farm households already have a cow each. Another year or two will pass and there will not be a single collective farmer without his own cow. We Bolsheviks will see to it that every one of our collective farmers has a cow. (*Prolonged applause.*)

As for the women collective farmers themselves, they must remember the power and significance of the collective farms for women ; they must remember that only in the collective farm do they have the opportunity of being on an equal footing with men. Without collective farms—inequality ; in collective farms—equal rights. Let our comrades, the women collective farmers, remember this and let them cherish the collective-farm system as the apple of their eye. (*Prolonged applause.*)

A few words about the members of the *Young Communist League, young men and women,* in the collective farms. The youth are our future, our hope, comrades. The youth have to take our place, the place of the old people. They have to carry our banner to final victory. Among the peasants there are not a few old people, borne down by the burden of the past, burdened with the habits and the recollections of the old life. Naturally, they are not always able to keep pace with the Party, to keep pace with the Soviet system. Our youth are different. They are free from the burden of the past, and it is easiest for them to assimilate Lenin's behests. And precisely because it is easiest for the youth to assimilate Lenin's behests, it is their mission to give a helping hand to the laggards and waverers. True, they lack knowledge. But knowledge is a thing that can be acquired. They may not have it today, but they will have it tomorrow. Hence, the task is to study and study again the principles of Leninism. Comrade members of the Young Communist League ! Learn the principles of Bolshevism and lead the waverers forward ! Talk less and work more, and your success will be assured. (*Applause.*)

A few words about the *individual peasants.* Little has been said here about the individual peasants. But that does not mean that they no longer exist. No, it does not mean that. Individual peasants do exist, and we must not leave them out of our calculations; for they are our collective farmers of tomorrow. I know that one section of the individual peasants has become utterly corrupt and has taken to speculating. That, no doubt, explains why the collective farmers accept individual peasants into the collective farms with great circumspection, and sometimes do not accept them at all. This, of course, is quite right, and there cannot be any objection to it. But there is another, larger section of individual peasants, who have not taken to speculating and who earn their bread by honest labour. These individual peasants, perhaps, would not be averse to joining the collective farms. But they are hindered in this, on the one hand, by their hesitation as to whether the collective-farm path is the right path; and, on the other hand, by the bitter feelings now existing amongst the collective farmers against the individual peasants.

Of course, we must understand the feelings of the collective farmers and appreciate their attitude. During the past years they have suffered not a few insults and jeers at the hands of the individual peasants. But insults and jeers must not be allowed to have decisive importance here. He is a bad leader who cannot forget an offence, and who puts his own feelings above the interests of the collective-farm cause. If you want to be leaders, you must be able to forget the insults to which you were subjected by certain individual peasants. Two years ago I received a letter from a peasant woman, a widow, living in the Volga region. She complained that the collective farm refused to accept her as a member, and she asked for my support. I made inquiries at the collective farm. I received a reply from the collective farm stating that they could not accept her because she had insulted a collective-farm meeting. Now, what was it all about? It seems that at a meeting of peasants at which the collective farmers called upon the individual peasants to join the collective farm, this very widow, in reply to this appeal, had lifted up her skirt and said—Here, take your collective farm! (*Laughter.*) Undoubtedly she had behaved badly and had insulted the meeting. But should her application to join the collective farm be rejected if, a year later, she sincerely repented and admitted her error? I think that her application should not be rejected. That is what I wrote to the collective farm. The widow was accepted into the collective farm. And what happened? It turns out that she is now working in the collective farm, not in the last, but in the front ranks. (*Applause.*)

There you have another example, showing that leaders, if they want to be true leaders, must be able to forget an offence if the interests of the cause demand it.

The same thing must be said about individual peasants generally. I am not opposed to the exercise of circumspection in accepting people into the collective farms. But I am against barring the path to the collective farms to all individual peasants without discrimination. That is not our policy, not the Bolshevik policy. The collective farmers must not forget that not long ago they themselves were individual peasants.

Finally, a few words about *the letter written by the collective farmers of Bezenchuk.*[41] This letter has been published, and you must have read it. It is unquestionably a good letter. It shows that among our collective farmers there are not a few experienced and intelligent organisers and agitators in the cause of collective farming, who are the pride of our country. But this letter contains one incorrect passage with which we cannot possibly agree. The point is that the Bezenchuk comrades describe their work in the collective farm as modest and all but insignificant work, whereas they describe the efforts of orators and leaders, who sometimes make speeches of inordinate length, as great and creative work. Can we agree with that? No, comrades, we cannot possibly agree with it. The Bezenchuk comrades have made a mistake here. Perhaps they made the mistake out of modesty. But the mistake does not cease to be a mistake for all that. The times have passed when leaders were regarded as the only makers of history, while the workers and peasants were not taken into account. The destinies of nations and of states are now determined, not only by leaders, but primarily and mainly by the vast masses of the working people. The workers and the peasants, who without fuss and noise are building factories and mills, constructing mines and railroads, building collective farms and state farms, creating all the values of life, feeding and clothing the whole world—they are the real heroes and the creators of the new life. Apparently, our Bezenchuk comrades have forgotten this. It is not good when people overrate their strength and begin to be conceited about the services they have rendered. That leads to boasting, and boasting is not a good thing. But it is still worse when people begin to underrate their strength and fail to see that their "modest" and "insignificant" work is really great and creative work that decides the fate of history.

I would like the Bezenchuk comrades to approve this slight amendment of mine to their letter.

With that, let us conclude, comrades.

(*Loud and prolonged applause, increasing to an ovation. All rise and greet Comrade Stalin. Loud Cheers. Shouts :* "Long live Comrade Stalin, hurrah !" "Long live the advanced collective farmer !" "Long live our leader, Comrade Stalin !")

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Dialectical and Historical Materialism

Dialectical materialism is the world outlook of the Marxist-Leninist party. It is called dialectical materialism because its approach to the phenomena of nature, its method of studying and apprehending them, is *dialectical,* while its interpretation of the phenomena of nature, its conception of these phenomena, its theory, is *materialistic.*

Historical materialism is the extension of the principles of dialectical materialism to the study of social life, an application of the principles of dialectical materialism to the phenomena of the life of society, to the study of society and of its history.

When describing their dialectical method, Marx and Engels usually refer to Hegel as the philosopher who formulated the main features of dialectics. This, however, does not mean that the dialectics of Marx and Engels is identical with the dialectics of Hegel. As a matter of fact, Marx and Engels took from the Hegelian dialectics only its "rational kernel", casting aside its Hegelian idealistic shell, and developed dialectics further so as to lend it a modern scientific form.

> "My dialectic method," says Marx, "is not only different from the the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel,......the process of thinking, which, under the name of 'the Idea' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos (creator) of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea'. With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought." (Karl Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1, p. xxx, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1938.)

When describing their materialism, Marx and Engels usually refer to Feuerbach as the philosopher who restored materialism to its rights. This, however, does not mean that the materialism of Marx and Engels is identical with Feuerbach's materialism. As a matter of fact, Marx and Engels took from Feuerbach's materialism its "inner kernel", developed it into a scientific-philosophical theory of materialism and cast aside its idealistic and religious-ethical encumbrances. We know that Feuerbach, although he was fundamentally a materialist, objected to the name materialism. Engels more than once declared that "in spite of the", materialist "foundation", Feuerbach "remained. . . . bound by the traditional idealist fetters", and that "the real idealism of Feuerbach becomes evident as soon as we come to his philosophy of religion and ethics." (Karl Marx, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Moscow 1946, Vol. 1, pp. 373, 375.)

Dialectics comes from the Greek *dialego,* to discourse, to debate. In ancient times dialectics was the art of arriving at the truth by disclosing the contradictions in the argument of an opponent and overcoming these contradictions. There were philosophers in ancient times who believed that the disclosure of contradictions in thought and the clash of opposite opinions was the best method of arriving at the truth. This dialectical method of thought, later extended to the phenomena of nature, developed into the dialectical method of apprehending nature, which regards the phenomena of nature as being in constant movement and undergoing constant change, and the development of nature as the result of the development of the contradictions in nature, as the result of the interaction of opposed forces in nature.

In its essence, dialectices is the direct opposite of metaphysics.

1) The principal features of the *Marxist dialectical method* are as follows :

a) Contrary to metaphysics, dialectics does not regard nature as an accidental agglomeration of things, of phenomena, unconnected with, isolated from, and independent of, each other, but as a connected and integral whole, in which things, phenomena are organically connected with, dependent on, and determined by, each other.

The dialectical method therefore holds that no phenomenon in nature can be understood if taken by itself, isolated from surrounding phenomena, inasmuch as any phenomenon in any realm of nature may become meaningless to us if it is not considered in connection with the surrounding conditions, but divorced from them ; and that, vice versa, any phenomenon can be understood and explained if considered in its inseparable connection with surrounding phenomena, as one conditioned by surrounding phenomena.

b) Contrary to metaphysics, dialectics holds that nature is not a state of rest and immobility, stagnation and immutability, but a state of continuous movement and change, of continuous renewal and development, where something is always arising and developing, and something always disintegrating and dying away.

The dialectical method therefore requires that phenomena should be considered not only from the standpoint of their interconnection and interdependence, but also from the standpoint of their movement, their change, their development, their coming into being and going out of being.

The dialectical method regards as important primarily not that which at the given moment seems to be durable and yet is already beginning to die away, but that which is arising and developing, even though at the given moment it may appear to be not durable, for the dialectical method considers invincible only that which is arising and developing.

> "All nature," say Engels, "from the smallest thing to the biggest, from a grain of sand to the sun, from the protista (the primary living cells —Ed.) to man, is in a constant state of coming into being and going out of being, in a constant flux, in a ceaseless state of movement and change." (F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature.*)

Therefore, "dialectics," Engels says, "takes things and their perceptual images essentially in their interconnection, in their concatenation, in their movement, in their rise and disappearance." (F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring.*)

c) Contrary to metaphysics, dialectics does not regard the process of development as a simple process of growth, where quantitative changes do not lead to qualitative changes, but as a development which passes from insignificant and imperceptible quantitative changes to open, fundamental changes, to qualitative changes ; a development in which the qualitative changes occur not gradually, but rapidly and abruptly, taking the form of a leap from one state to another ; they occur not accidentally but as the natural result of an accumulation of imperceptible and gradual quantitative changes.

The dialectical method therefore holds that the process of development should be understood not as movement in a circle, not as a simple repetition of what has already occurred, but as an onward and upward movement, as a transition from an old qualitative state to a new qualitative state, as a development from the simple to the complex, from the lower to the higher :

> "Nature," says Engels, "is the test of dialectics, and it must be said for modern natural science that it has furnished extremely rich and daily increasing materials for this test, and has thus proved that in the last analysis nature's process is dialectical and not metaphysical, that it does not move in an eternally uniform and constantly repeated circle, but passes through real history. Here prime mention should be made of Darwin, who dealt a severe blow to the metaphysical conception of nature by proving that the organic world of today, plants and animals, and consequently man too, is all a product of a process of development that has been in progress for millions of years." (*Ibid*).

Describing dialectical development as a transition from quantitative changes to qualitative changes, Engels says :

> "In physics. . . .every change is a passing of quantity into quality, as a result of a quantitative change of some form of movement either inherent in a body or imparted to it. For example, the temperature of water has at first no effect on its liquid state ; but as the temperature of liquid water rises or falls, a moment arrives when this state of cohesion changes and the water is converted in one case into steam and in the other into ice. . . .A definite minimum current is required to make a platinum wire glow ; every metal has its melting temperature ; every liquid has a definite freezing point and boiling point at a given pressure, as far as we are able with the means at our disposal to attain the required temperatures ; finally, every gas has its critical point at which, by proper pressure and cooling, it can be converted into a liquid state. . . . What are known as the constants of physics [the point at which one state passes into another—*Ed.*] are in most cases nothing but designations for the nodal points at which a quantitative [change] increase or decrease of movement causes a qualitative change in the state of the given body, and at which, consequently quantity is transformed into quality." (*Dialectics of Nature*).

Passing to chemistry, Engels continues :

> "Chemistry may be called the science of the qualitative changes which take place in bodies as the effect of changes of quantitative composition. This was already known to Hegel. . . .Take oxygen : if the molecule contains three atoms instead of the customary two, we get ozone, a body definitely distinct in odour and reaction from ordinary oxygen. And what shall we say of the different proportions in which oxygen combines with nitrogen or sulphur, and each of which produces a body qualitatively different from all other bodies ! (*Ibid*)

Finally, criticizing Dühring, who scolded Hegel for all he was worth, but surreptitiously borrowed from him the well-known thesis that the transition from the insentient world to the sentient world, from the kingdom of inorganic matter to the kingdom of organic life, is a leap to a new state, Engels says :

> "This is precisely the Hegelian nodal line of measure relations, in which, at certain definite nodal points, the purely quantitative increase or decrease gives rise to a *qualitative leap*, for example, in the case of water which is heated or cooled, where boiling point and freezing point are the nodes at which—under normal pressure—the leap to a new aggregate state takes place, and where consequently quantity is transformed into quality." (F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*.)

d) Contrary to metaphysics, dialetics, holds that internal contradictions are inherent in all things and phenomena of nature, for they all have their negative and positive sides, a past and a future, something dying away and something developing; and that the struggle between these opposites, the struggle between the old and the new, between that which is dying away and that which is being born, between that which is disappearing and that which is developing, constitutes the internal content of the process of development, the internal content of the transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative changes.

The dialectical method therefore holds that the process of development from the lower to the higher takes place not as a harmonious unfolding of phenomena, but as a disclosure of the contradictions inherent in things and phenomena, as a "struggle" of opposite tendencies which operate on the basis of these contradictions.

> "In its proper meaning," Lenin says, "dialectics is the study of the contradiction *within the very essence of things*." (Lenin, *Philosophical Notebooks*, Russ. ed., p. 263.)

And further :

> "Development is the 'struggle' of opposites." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed, Vol. XIII, p. 301.)

Such, in brief, are the principal features of the Marxist dialectical method.

It is easy to understand how immensely important is the extension of the principles of the dialectical method to the study of social life and the history of society, and how immensely important is the application of these principles to the history of society and to the practical activities of the party of the proletariat.

If there are no isolated phenomena in the world, if all phenomena are interconnected and interdependent, then it is clear that every social system and every social movement in history must be evaluated not from the standpoint of "eternal justice" or some other preconceived idea, as is not infrequently done by historians, but from the standpoint of the conditions which gave rise to that system or that social movement and with which they are connected.

The slave system would be senseless, stupid and unnatural under modern conditions. But under the conditions of a disintegrating primitive communal system, the slave system is a quite understandable and natural phenomenon, since it represents an advance on the primitive communal system.

The demand for a bourgeois-democratic republic when tsardom and bourgeois society existed, as, let us say, in Russia in 1905, was a quite understandable, proper and revolutionary demand, for at that time a bourgeois republic would have meant a step forward. But now, under the conditions of the U.S.S.R., the demand for a bourgeois-democratic republic would be a senseless and counter-revolutionary demand, for a bourgeois republic would be a retrograde step compared with the Soviet republic.

Everything depends on the conditions, time and place.

It is clear that without such a *historical* approach to social phenomena, the existence and development of the science of history is impossible, for only such an approach saves the science of history from becoming a jumble of accidents and an agglomeration of most absurd mistakes.

Further, if the world is in a state of constant movement and development, if the dying away of the old and the upgrowth of the new is a law of development, then it is clear that there can be no "immutable" social systems, no "eternal principles" of private property and exploitation, no "eternal ideas" of the subjugation of the peasant to the landlord, of the worker to the capitalist.

Hence, the capitalist system can be replaced by the Socialist system, just as at one time the feudal system was replaced by the capitalist system.

Hence, we must not base our orientation on the strata of society which are no longer developing, even though they at present constitute the predominant force, but on those strata which are developing and have a future before them, even though they at present do not constitute the predominant force.

In the eighties of the past century, in the period of the struggle between the Marxists and the Narodniks, the proletariat in Russia constituted an insignificant minority of the population, whereas the individual peasants constituted the vast majority of the population. But the proletariat was developing as a class, whereas the peasantry as a class was disintegrating. And just because the proletariat was developing as a class the Marxists based their orientation on the proletariat. And they were not mistaken, for, as we know, the proletariat subsequently grew from an insignificant force into a first-rate historical and political force.

Hence, in order not to err in policy, one must look forward, not backward.

Further, if the passing of slow quantitative changes into rapid and abrupt qualitative changes is a law of development, then it is clear that revolutions made by oppressed classes are a quite natural and inevitable phenomenon.

Hence, the transition from capitalism to Socialism and the liberation of the working class from the yoke of capitalism cannot be effected by slow changes, by reforms, but only by a qualitative change of the capitalist system, by revolution.

Hence, in order not to err in policy, one must be a revolutionary, not a reformist.

Further, if development proceeds by way of the disclosure of internal contradictions, by way of collisions between opposite forces on the basis of these contradictions and so as to overcome these contradictions, then it is clear that the class struggle of the proletariat is a quite natural and inevitable phenomenon.

Hence, we must not cover up the contradictions of the capitalist system, but disclose and unravel them ; we must not try to check the class struggle but carry it to its conclusion.

Hence, in order not to err in policy, one must pursue an uncompromising proletarian class policy, not a reformist policy of harmony of the interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, not a compromisers' policy of "the growing of capitalism into Socialism."

Such is the Marxist dialectical method when applied to social life, to the history of society.

As to Marxist philosophical materialism, it is fundamentally the direct opposite of philosophical idealism.

2) The principal features of *Marxist philosophical materialism* are as follows :

a) Contrary to idealism, which regards the world as the embodiment of an "absolute idea," a "universal spirit", "consciousness", Marx's philosophical materialism holds that the world is by its very nature *material*, that the multifold phenomena of the world constitute different forms of matter in motion, that interconnection and interdependence of phenomena, as established by the dialectical method, are a law of the development of moving matter, and that the world develops in accordance with the laws of movement of matter and stands in no need of a "universal spirit".

> "The materialistic outlook on nature," says Engels, "means no more than simply conceiving nature just as it exists, without any foreign admixture." (F. Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, Eng. ed., Moscow 1934, p. 79.)

Speaking of the materialist views of the ancient philosopher Heraclitus, who held that "the world, the all in one, was not created by any god or any man, but was, is and ever will be a living flame, systematically flaring up and systematically dying down," Lenin comments : "A very good exposition of the rudiments of dialectical materialism." (Lenin, *Philosophical Notebooks*, Russ. ed., p. 318.)

b) Contrary to idealism, which asserts that only our consciousness really exists, and that the material world, being, nature, exists only in our consciousness, in our sensations, ideas and perceptions, the Marxist materialist philosophy holds that matter, nature, being, is an objective reality existing outside and independent of our consciousness ; that matter is primary, since it is the source of sensations, ideas, consciousness, and that consciousness is secondary, derivative, since it is a reflection of matter, a reflection of being ; that thought is a product of matter which in its development has reached a high degree of perfection, namely, of the brain, and the brain is the organ of thought, and that therefore one cannot separate thought from matter without committing a grave error. Engels says :

> "The question of the relation of thinking to being, the relation of spirit to nature is the paramount question of the whole of philosophy. . . . The answers which the philosophers gave to this question split them into two great camps. Those who asserted the primacy of spirit to nature. . . . comprised the camp of *idealism*. The others, who regarded nature as primary, belong to the various schools of *materialism*." (Karl Marx, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Moscow 1946, Vol. I, pp. 336-67.)

And further :

> "The material, sensuously perceptible world to which we ourselves belong is the only reality.... Our consciousness and thinking, however supra-sensuous they may seem, are the product of a material, bodily organ, the brain. Matter is not a product of consciousness, but consciousness itself is merely the highest product of matter." (Karl Marx, *Selected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. I, p. 332).

Concerning the question of matter and thought, Marx says :

> *"It is impossible to separate thought from matter that thinks.* Matter is the subject of all changes." (*Ibid*, p. 335.)

Describing Marxist philosophical materialism, Lenin says:

> "Materialism in general recognizes objectively real being (matter) as independent of consciousness, sensation, experience.... Consciousness is only the reflection of being, at best an approximately true (adequate, perfectly exact) reflection of it." (Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Eng. ed., Moscow 1947, pp. 3733—8.)

And further :

> "Matter is that which, acting upon our sense-organs, produces sensation ; matter is the objective reality given to us in sensation.... Matter, nature, being, the physical... is primary, and spirit, consciousness, sensation, the psychical—is secondary." (*Ibid*, pp. 145, 146.)
>
> "The world picture is a picture of how matter moves and of how *'matter thinks'*." (Ibid., p. 367.)
>
> "The brain is the organ of thought." (*Ibid.*, p. 152.)

c) Contrary to idealism, which denies the possibility of knowing the world and its laws, which does not believe in the authenticity of our knowledge, does not recognize objective truth, and holds that the world is full of "things-in-themselves" that can never be known to science, Marxist philosophical materialism holds that the world and its laws are fully knowable, that our knowledge of the laws of nature, tested by experiment and practice, is authentic knowledge having the validity of objective truth, and that there are no things in the world which are unknowable, but only things which are still not known, but which will be disclosed and made known by the efforts of science and practice.

Criticizing the thesis of Kant and other idealists that the world is unknowable and that there are "things-in-themselves" which are unknowable, and defending the well-known materialist thesis that our knowledge is authentic knowledge, Engels writes:

> "The most telling refutation of this as of all other philosophical crotchets is practice, viz., experiment and industry. If we are able to prove the correctness of our conception of a natural process by making it ourselves, bringing it into being out if its conditions and making it serve our own purposes into the bargain, then there is an end of the Kantion incomprehensible 'thing-in-itself'. The chemical substances produced in the bodies of plants and animals remained such 'things-in-themselves' until organic chemistry began to produce them one after another, whereupon the 'thing in-itself' became a thing for us, as, for instance, alizarin, the colouring matter of the madder, which we no longer trouble to grow in the madder roots in the field, but produce much more cheaply and simply from coal tar. For three hundred years the Copernican solar system was a hypothesis with a hundred, a thousand or ten thousand chances to one in its favour, but still always a hypothesis. But when Leverrier, by means of the data provided by this system, not only deduced the necessity of the existence of an unknown planet, but also calculated the position in the heavens which this planet must necessarily occupy, and when Galle really found this planet, the Copernican system was proved." (Karl Marx, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Moscow 1946, Vol. I, p. 368.)

Accusing Bogdanov, Bazarov, Yushkevich and the other followers of Mach of fideism, and defending the well-known materialist thesis that our scientific knowledge of the laws of nature is authentic knowledge, and that the laws of science represent objective truth, Lenin says :

> "Contemporary fideism does not at all reject science ; all it rejects is the 'exaggerated claims' of science, to wit, its claim to objective truth. If objective truth exists (as the materialists think), if natural science, reflecting the outer world in human 'experience', is alone capable of giving us objective truth, then all fideism is absolutely refuted." (Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism,* Eng. ed., Moscow 1947, pp. 123-24.)

Such, in brief, are the characteristic features of the Marxist philosophical materialism.

It is easy to understand how immensely important is the extension of the principles of philosophical materialism to the study of social life, of the history of society, and how immensely important is the application of these principles to the history of society and to the practical activities of the party of the proletariat.

If the connection between the phenomena of nature and their interdependence are laws of the development of nature, it follows, too, that the connection and inter-dependence of the phenomena of social life are laws of the development of society, and not something accidental.

Hence, social life, the history of society, ceases to be an agglomeration of "accidents", and becomes the history of the development of society according to regular laws, and the study of the history of society becomes a science.

Hence, the practical activity of the party of the proletariat must not be based on the good wishes of "outstanding individuals," not on the dictates of "reason", "universal morals", etc., but on the laws of development of society and on the study of these laws.

Further, if the world is knowable and our knowledge of the laws of development of nature is authentic knowledge, having the validity of objective truth, it follows that social life, the development of society, is also knowable, and that the data of science regarding the laws of development of society are authentic data having the validity of objective truths.

Hence, the science of the history of society, despite all the complexity of the phenomena of social life, can become as precise a science as, let us say, biology, and capable of making use of the laws of development of society for practical purposes.

Hence, Socialism is converted from a dream of a better future its practical activity by casual motives, but by the laws of development of society, and by practical deductions from these laws.

Hence, Socialism is converted from a dream of a better future for humanity into a science.

Hence, the bond between science and practical activity, between theory and practice, their unity, should be the guiding star of the party of the proletariat.

Further, if nature, being, the material world, is primary, and consciousness, thought, is secondary, derivative ; if the material world represents objective reality existing independently of the consciousness of men, while consciousness is a reflection of this objective reality, it follows that the material life of society, its being, is also primary, and its spritual life secondary, derivative, and that the material life of society is an objective reality existing independently of the will of men, while the spiritual life of society is a reflection of this objective reality, a reflection of being.

Hence, the source of formation of the spiritual life of society, the origin of social ideas, social theories, political views and political institutions, should not be sought for in the ideas, theories, views and political institutions themselves, but in the conditions of the material life of society, in social being, of which these ideas, theories, views, etc., are the reflection.

Hence, if in different periods of the history of society different social ideas, theories, views and political institutions are to be observed; if under the slave system we encounter certain social ideas, theories, views and political institutions, under feudalism others, and under capitalism others still, this is not to be explained by the "nature", the "properties" of the ideas, theories, views and political institutions themselves but by the different conditions of the material life of society at different periods of social development.

Whatever is the being of a society, whatever are the conditions of material life of a society, such are the ideas, theories, political views and political institutons of that society.

In this connection, Marx says :

> "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." (Karl Marx, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Moscow 1946, Vol. I, p. 300.)

Hence, in order not to err in policy, in order not to find itself in the position of idle dreamers, the party of the proletariat must not base its activities on abstract "principles of human reason", but on the concrete conditions of the material life of society, as the determining force of social development ; not on the good wishes of "great men", but on the real needs of development of the material life of society.

The fall of the utopians, including the Narodniks, Anarchists and Socialist-Revolutionaries, was due, among other things, to the fact that they did not recognize the primary role which the conditions of the material life of society play in the development of society, and, sinking to idealism, did not base their practical activities on the needs of the development of the material life of society, but independently of and in spite of these needs on "ideal plans" and "all-embracing projects" divorced from the real life of society.

The strength and vitality of Marxism-Leninism lies in the fact that it does base its practical activity on the needs of the development of the material life of society and never divorces itself from the real life of society.

It does not follow from Marx's words, however, that social ideas, theories, political views and political institutions are of no significance in the life of society, that they do not reciprocally affect social being, the development of the material conditions of the life of society. We have been speaking so far of the *origin* of social ideas, theories, views and political institutions, of the *way they arise,* of the fact that the spiritual life of society is a reflection of the conditions of its material life. As regards the *significance* of social ideas, theories, views and political institutions, as regards their *role* in history, historical materialism, far from denying them, stresses the important role and significance of these factors in the life of society, in its history.

There are different kinds of social ideas and theories. There are old ideas and theories which have outlived their day and which serve the interests of the moribund forces of society. Their significance lies in the fact that they hamper the development, the progress of society. Then there are new and advanced ideas and theories which serve the interests of the advanced forces of society. Their significance lies in the fact that they facilitate the development, the progress of society ; and their significance is the greater the more accurately they reflect the needs of development of the material life of society.

New social ideas and theories arise only after the development of the material life of society has set new tasks before society. But once they have arisen they become a most potent force which facilitates the carrying out of the new tasks set by the development of the material life of society, a force which facilitates the progress of society. It is precisely here that the tremendous organizing, mobilizing and transforming value of new ideas, new theories, new political views and new political institutions manifests itself. New social ideas and theories arise precisely because they are necessary to society, because it is *impossible* to carry out the urgent tasks of development of the material life of society without their organizing, mobilizing and transforming action. Arising out of the new tasks set by the development of the material life of society, the new social ideas and theories force their way through, become the possession of the masses, mobilize and organize them against the moribund forces of society, and thus facilitate the overthrow of these forces, which hamper the development of the material life of society.

Thus social ideas, theories and political institutions, having arisen on the basis of the urgent tasks of the development of the material life of society, the development of social being, themselves then react upon social being, upon the material life of society, creating the conditions necessary for completely carrying out the urgent tasks of the material life of society, and for rendering its further development possible.

It this connection, Marx says :

> "Theory becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses." (*Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie.*)

Hence, in order to be able to influence the conditions of material life of society and to accelerate their development and their improvement, the party of the proletariat must rely upon such a social theory, such a social idea as correctly reflects the needs of development of the material life of society, and which is therefore capable of setting into motion broad masses of the people and of mobilizing them and organizing them into a great army of the proletarian party, prepared to smash the reactionary forces and to clear the way for the advanced forces of society.

The fall of the " Economists" and Mensheviks was due among other things to the fact that they did not recognize the mobilizing, organizing and transforming role of advanced theory, of advanced ideas and, sinking to vulgar materialism, reduced the role of these factors almost to nothing, thus condemning the Party to passivity and inanition.

The strength and vitality of Marxism-Leninism is derived from the fact that it relies upon an advanced theory which correctly reflects the needs of development of the material life of society, that it elevates theory to a proper level, and that it deems it its duty to utilize every ounce of the mobilizing, organizing and transforming power of this theory.

That is the answer historical materialism gives to the question of the relation between social being and social consciousness, between the conditions of development of material life and the development of the spiritual life of society.

3) *Historical Materialism.*

It now remains to elucidate the following question : what, from the viewpoint of historical materialism, is meant by the "conditions of material life of society" which in the final analysis determine the physiognomy of society, its ideas, views, political institutions, etc. ?

What, after all, are these "conditions of material life of society", what are their distinguishing features?

There can be no doubt that the concept "conditions of material life of society" includes, first of all, nature which surrounds society, geographical environment, which is one of the indispensable and constant conditions of material life of society and which, of course, influences the development of society. What role does geographical environment play in the development of society? Is geographical environment the chief force determining the physiognomy of society, the character of the social system of man, the transition from one system to another?

Historical materialism answers this question in the negative.

Geographical environment is unquestionably one of the constant and indispensable conditions of development of society and, of course, influences the development of society, accelerates or retards its development. But its influence is not the *determining* influence, inasmuch as the changes and development of society proceed at an incomparably faster rate than the changes and development of geographical environment. In the space of three thousand years three different social systems have been successively superseded in Europe: the primitive communal system, the slave system and the feudal system. In the eastern part of Europe, in the U.S.S.R., even four social systems have been superseded. Yet during this period geographical conditions in Europe have either not changed at all, or have changed so slightly that geography takes no note of them. And that is quite natural. Changes in geographical environment of any importance require millions of years, whereas a few hundred or a couple of thousand years are enough for even very important changes in the system of human society.

It follows from this that geographical environment cannot be the chief cause, the *determining* cause of social development, for that which remains almost unchanged in the course of tens of thousands of years cannot be the chief cause of development of that which undergoes fundamental changes in the course of a few hundred years.

Further, there can be no doubt that the concept "conditions of material life of society" also includes growth of population, density of population of one degree or another, for people are essential element of the conditions of material life of society, and without a definite minimum number of people there can be no material life of society. Is not growth of population the chief force that determines the character of social system of man?

Historical materialism answers this question too in the negative.

Of course, growth of population does influence the development of society, does facilitate or retard the development of society, but it cannot be the chief force of development of society, and its influence on the development of society cannot be the *determining* influence because, by itself, growth of population does not furnish the clue to the question why a given social system is replaced precisely by such and such a new system and not by another, why the primitive communal system is succeeded precisely by the slave system, the slave system by the feudal system, and the feudal system by the bourgeois system, and not by some other.

If growth of population were the determining force of social development, then a higher density of population would be bound to give rise to a correspondingly higher type of social system. But we do not find this to be the case. The density of population in China is four times as great as in the U.S.A., yet the U.S.A. stands higher than China in the scale of social development, for in China a semi-feudal system still prevails, whereas the U.S.A. has long ago reached the highest stage of development of capitalism. The density of population in Belgium is 19 times as great as in the U.S.A. and 26 times as great as in the U.S.S.R. Yet the U.S.A. stands higher than Belgium in the scale of social development; and as for the U.S.S.R., Belgium lags a whole historical epoch behind this country, for in Belgium the capitalist system prevails, whereas the U.S.S.R. has already done away with capitalism and has set up a Socialist system.

It follows from this that growth of population is not, and cannot be, the chief force of development of society, the force which *determine*s the character of the social system, the physiognomy of society.

(a) What, then, is the chief force in the complex of conditions of material life of society which determines the physiognomy of society, the character of the social system, the development of society from one system to another?

This force, historical materialism holds, is the *method of procuring the means of life* necessary for human existence, the *mode of production of material values*—food, clothing footwear, houses, fuel, instruments of production, etc.—which are indispensable for the life and development of society.

In order to live, people must have food, clothing, footwear, shelter, fuel, etc. ; in order to have these material values, people must produce them ; and in order to produce them, people must have the instruments of production with which food, clothing, footwear, shelter, fuel, etc., are produced ; they must be able to produce these instruments and to use them.

The *instruments of production* wherewith material values are produced, the *people* who operate the instruments of production and carry on the production of material values thanks to a certain *production experience and labour skill*—all these elements jointly constitute the *productive forces* of society.

But the productive forces are only one aspect of production, only one aspect of the mode of production, an aspect that expresses the relation of men to the objects and forces of nature which they make use of for the production of material values. Another aspect of production, another aspect of the mode of production, is the relation of men to each other in the process of production, men's *relations of production.* Men carry on a struggle against nature and utilize nature for the production of material values not in isolation from each other, not as separate individuals, but in common, in groups, in societies. Production, therefore, is at all times and under all conditions *social* production. In the production of material values men enter into mutual relations of one kind or another within production, into relations of production of one kind or another. These may be relations of co-operation and mutual help between people who are free from exploitation ; they may be relations of domination and subordination ; and, lastly, they may be transitional from one form of relations of production to another. But whatever the character of the relations of production may be, always and in every system, they constitute just as essential an element of production as the productive forces of society.

> "In production," Marx says, "men not only act on nature but also on one another. They produce only by co-operating in a certain way and mutually exchanging their activities. In order to produce, they enter into definite connections and relations with one another and only within these social connections and relations does their action on nature, does pro-

duction, take place." (Karl Marx, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Moscow 1946, Vol. I, p. 211.)

Consequently, production, the mode of production, embraces both the productive forces of society and men's relations of production, and is thus the embodiment of their unity in the process of production of material values.

b) *The first feature* of production is that it never stays at one point for a long time and is always in a state of change and development, and that, furthermore, changes in the mode of production inevitably call forth changes in the whole social system, social ideas, political views and political institutions—they call forth a reconstruction of the whole social and political order. At different stages of development people make use of different modes of production, or, to put it more crudely, lead different manners of life. In the primitive commune there is one mode of production, under slavery there is another mode of production, under feudalism a third mode of production, and so on. And, correspondingly, men's social system, the spiritual life of men, their views and political institutions also vary.

Whatever is the mode of production of a society, such in the main is the society itself, its ideas and theories, its political views and institutions.

Or, to put it more crudely, whatever is man's manner of life, such is his manner of thought.

This means that the history of development of society is above all the history of the development of production, the history of the modes of production which succeed each other in the course of centuries, the history of the development of productive forces and of people's relations of production.

Hence, the history of social development is at the same time the history of the producers of material values themselves, the history of the labouring masses, who are the chief force in the process of production and who carry on the production of material values necessary for existence of society.

Hence, if historical science is to be a real science, it can no longer reduce the history of social development to the actions of kings and generals, to the actions of "conquerors" and "subjugators" of states, but must above all devote itself to the history of the producers of material values, the history of the labouring masses, the history of peoples.

Hence, the clue to the study of the laws of history of society must not be sought in men's minds, in the views and ideas of society, but in the mode of production practised by society in any given historical period ; it must be sought in the economic life of society.

Hence, the prime task of historical science is to study and disclose the laws of production, the laws of development of the productive forces and of the relations of production, the laws of economic development of society.

Hence, if the party of the proletariat is to be a real party, it must above all acquire a knowledge of the laws of development of production, of the laws of economic development of society.

Hence, if it is not to err in policy, the party of the proletariat must both in drafting its programme and in its practical activities proceed primarily from the laws of development of production, from the laws of economic development of society.

c) *The second feature* of production is that its changes and development always begin with changes and development of the productive forces, and in the first place, with changes and development of the instruments of production. Productive forces are therefore the most mobile and revolutionary element of production. First the productive forces of society change and develop, and then, *depending* on these changes and *in conformity with them,* men's relations of production, their economic relations, change. This, however, does not mean that the relations of production do not influence the development of the productive forces and that the latter are not dependent on the former. While their development is dependent on the development of the productive forces, the relations of production in their turn react upon the development of the productive forces, accelerating or retarding it. In this connection it should be noted that the relations of production cannot for too long a time lag behind and be in a state of contradiction to the growth of the productive forces, inasmuch as the productive forces can develop in full measure only when the relations of production correspond to the character, the state of the productive forces and allow full scope for their development. Therefore, however much the relations of production may lag behind the development of the productive forces, they must, sooner or later, come into correspondence with—and actually do come into correspondence with—the level of development of the productive forces, the character of the productive forces. Otherwise we would have a fundamental violation of the unity of the productive forces and the relations of production within the system of production, a disruption of production as a whole, a crisis of production, a destruction of productive forces.

An instance in which the relations of production do not correspond to the character of the productive forces, conflict with them, is the economic crises in capitalist countries, where private capitalist ownership of the means of production is in glaring incongruity with the social character of the process of production, with the character of the productive forces. This results in economic crises, which lead to the destruction of productive forces. Furthermore, this incongruity itself constitutes the economic basis of social revolution, the purpose of which is to destroy the existing relations of production and to create new relations of production corresponding to the character of the productive forces.

In contrast, an instance in which the relations of production completely correspond to the character of the productive forces is the Socialist national economy of the U.S.S.R., where the social ownership of the means of production fully corresponds to the social character of the process of production, and where, because of this, economic crises and the destruction of productive forces are unknown.

Consequently, the productive forces are not only the most mobile and revolutionary element in production, but are also the determining element in the development of production.

Whatever are the productive forces such must be the relations of production.

While the state of the productive forces furnishes the answer to the question—with what instruments of production do men produce the material values they need?—the state of the relations of production furnishes the answer to another question—who owns the *means of production* (the land, forests, waters, mineral resources, raw materials, instruments of production, production premises, means of transportation and communication, etc.), who commands the means of production, whether the whole of society, or individual persons, groups, or classes which utilize them for the exploitation of other persons, groups or classes?

Here is a rough picture of the development of productive forces from ancient times to our day. The transition from crude stone tools to the bow and arrow, and the accompanying transition from the life of hunters to the domestication of animals and primitive pasturage ; the transition from stone tools to metal tools (the iron axe, the wooden plough fitted with an iron colter, etc.), with a corresponding transition to tillage and agriculture ; a further improvement in metal tools for the working up of materials, the introduction of the blacksmith's bellows, the introduction of pottery, with a corresponding development of handicrafts, the separation of handicrafts from agriculture, the development of an independent handicraft industry and, subsequently, of manufacture ; the transition from handicraft tools to machines and the transformation of handicraft and manufacture into machine industry ; the transition to the machine system and the rise of modern large-scale machine industry—such is a general and far from complete picture of the development of the productive forces of society in the course of man's history. It will be clear that the development and improvement of the instruments of production was effected by men who were related to production, and not independently of men ; and, consequently, the change and development of the instruments of production was accompanied by a change and development of men, as the most important element of the productive forces, by a change and development of their production experience, their labour skill, their ability to handle the instruments of production.

In conformity with the change and development of the productive forces of society in course of history, men's relations of production, their economic relations also changed and developed.

Five *main* types of relations of production are known to history ; primitive communal, slave, feudal, capitalist and Socialist.

The basis of the relations of production under the primitive communal system is that the means of production are socially owned. This in the main corresponds to the character of the productive forces of that period. Stone tools, and, later, the bow and arrow, precluded the possibility of men individually combating the forces of nature and beasts of prey. In order to gather the fruits of the forest, to catch fish, to build some sort of habitation, men were obliged to work in common if they did not want to die of starvation, or fall victim to beasts of prey or to neighbouring societies. Labour in common led to the common ownership of the means of production, as well as of the fruits of production.

Here the conception of private ownership of the means of production did not yet exist, except for the personal ownership of certain implements of production which were at the same time means of defence against beasts of prey. Here there was no exploitation, no classes.

The basis of the relations of production under the slave system is that the slaveowner owns the means of production; he also owns the worker in production—the slave, whom he can sell, purchase, or kill as though he were an animal. Such relations of production in the main correspond to the state of the productive forces of that period. Instead of stone tools, men now have metal tools at their command; instead of the wretched and primitive husbandry of the hunter, who knew neither pasturage nor tillage, there now appear pasturage, tillage, handicrafts, and a division of labour between these branches of production. There appears the possibility of the exchange of products between individuals and between societies, of the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few, the actual accumulation of the means of production in the hands of a minority, and the possibility of subjugation of the majority by a minority and the conversion of the majority into slaves. Here we no longer find the common and free labour of all members of society in the production process—here there prevails the forced labour of slaves, who are exploited by the non-labouring slaveowners. Here, therefore, there is no common ownership of the means of production or of the fruits of production. It is replaced by private ownership. Here the slaveowner appears as the prime and principal property owner in the full sense of the term.

Rich and poor, exploiters and exploited, people with full rights and people with no rights, and a fierce class struggle between them—such is the picture of the slave system.

The basis of the relations of production under the feudal system is that the feudal lord owns the means of production and does not fully own the worker in production—the serf, whom the feudal lord can no longer kill, but whom he can buy and sell. Alongside of feudal ownership there exists individual ownership by the peasant and the handicraftsman of his implements of production and his private enterprise based on his personal labour. Such relations of production in the main correspond to the state of the productive forces of that period. Further improvements in the smelting and working of iron ; the spread of the iron plough and the loom ; the further development of agriculture, horticulture, viniculture and dairying ; the appearance of manufactories alongside of the handicraft workshops—such are the characteristic features of the state of the productive forces.

The new productive forces demand that the labourer shall display some kind of initiative in production and an inclination for work, an interest in work. The feudal lord therefore discards the slave, as a labourer who has no interest in work and is entirely without initiative, and prefers to deal with the serf, who has his own husbandry, implements of production, and a certain interest in work essential for the cultivation of the land and for the payment in kind of a part of his harvest to the feudal lord.

Here private ownership is further developed. Exploitation is nearly as severe as it was under slavery—it is only slightly mitigated. A class struggle between exploiters and exploited is the principal feature of the feudal system.

The basis of the relations of production under the capitalist system is that the capitalist owns the means of production, but not the workers in production—the wage labourers, whom the capitalist can neither kill nor sell because they are personally free, but who are deprived of means of production and, in order not to die of hunger, are obliged to sell their labour power to the capitalist and to bear the yoke of exploitation. Alongside of capitalist property in the means of production, we find, at first on a wide scale, private property of the peasants and handicraftsmen in the means of production, these peasants and handicraftsmen no longer being serfs, and their private property being based on personal labour. In place of the handicraft workshops and manufactories there appear huge mills and factories equipped with machinery. In place of the manorial estates tilled by the primitive implements of production of the peasant, there now appear large capitalist farms run on scientific lines and supplied with agricultural machinery.

The new productive forces require that the workers in production shall be better educated and more intelligent than the downtrodden and ignorant serfs, that they be able to understand machinery and operate it properly. Therefore, the capitalists prefer to deal with wage workers, who are free from the bonds of serfdom and who are educated enough to be able properly to operate machinery.

But having developed productive forces to a tremendous extent, capitalism has become enmeshed in contradictions which it is unable to solve. By producing larger and larger quantities of commodities, and reducing their prices, capitalism intensifies competition, ruins the mass of small and medium private owners, converts them into proletarians and reduces their purchasing power, with the result that it becomes impossible to dispose of the commodities produced. On the other hand, by expanding production and concentrating millions of workers in huge mills and factories, capitalism lends the process of production a social character and thus undermines its own foundation, inasmuch as the social character of the process of production demands the social ownership of the means of production ; yet the means of production remain private capitalist property, which is incompatible with the social character of the process of production.

These irreconcilable contradictions between the character of the productive forces and the relations of production make themselves felt in periodical crises of overproduction, when the capitalists, finding no effective demand for their goods owing to the ruin of the mass of the population which they themselves have brought about, are compelled to burn products, destroy manufactured goods, suspend production, and destroy productive forces at a time when millions of people are forced to suffer unemployment and starvation, not because there are not enough goods, but because there is an overproduction of goods.

This means that the capitalist relations of production have ceased to correspond to the state of productive forces of society and have come into irreconcilable contradiction with them.

This means that capitalism is pregnant with revolution, whose mission it is to replace the existing capitalist ownership of the means of production by Socialist ownership.

This means that the main feature of the capitalist system is a most acute class struggle between the exploiters and the exploited.

The basis of relations of production under the Socialist system, which so far has been established only in the U.S.S.R., is the social ownership of the means of production. Here there are no longer exploiters and exploited. The goods produced are distributed according to labour performed, on the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." Here the mutual relations of people in the process of production are marked by comradely co-operation and the Socialist mutual assistance of workers who are free from exploitation. Here the relations of production fully correspond to the state of productive forces, for the social character of the process of production is reinforced by the social ownership of means of production.

For this reason Socialist production in the U.S.S.R. knows no periodical crises of overproduction and their accompanying absurdities.

For this reason, the productive forces here develop at an accelerated pace, for the relations of production that correspond to them offer full scope for such development.

Such is the picture of the development of men's relations of production in the course of human history.

Such is the dependence of the development of the relations of production on the development of the productive forces of society, and primarily, on the development of the instruments of production, the dependence by virtue of which the changes and development of the productive forces sooner or later lead to corresponding changes and development of the relations of production.

> "The use and fabrication of instruments of labour,"* says Marx, "although existing in the germ among certain species of animals, is specifically characteristic of the human labour-process, and Franklin therefore defines man as a tool-making animal. Relics of bygone instruments of labour possess the same importance for the investigation of extinct economical forms of society, as do fossil bones for the determination of extinct species of animals. It is not the articles made, but how they are made and by what instruments, that enables us to distinguish different economical epochs. Instruments of labour not only supply a standard of the degree of development to which human labour has attained, but they are also indicators of the social conditions under which that labour is carried on." (Karl Marx, *Capital,* London 1908, Vol. 1, Page 159.)

And further :

> —"Social relations are closely bound up with productive forces. In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production ; and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations. The hand-mill gives

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* By instruments of labour Marx has in mind primarily instruments of production.—*Ed.*

you society with the feudal lord; the steam mill society with the industrial capitalist." (Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Eng. ed., Moscow 1935, p. 92).

—"There is a continual movement of growth in productive forces, of destruction in social relations, of formation in ideas; the only immutable thing is the abstraction of movement." (*Ibid.*, p. 39.)

Speaking of historical materialism as formulated in the *Communist Manifesto,* Engels says:

"Economic production and the structure of society of every historical epoch necessarily arising therefrom constitute the foundation for the political and intellectual history of that epoch; ....consequently (ever since the dissolution of the primeval communal ownership of land) all history has been a history of class struggles, of struggles between exploited and exploiting, between dominated and dominating classes at various stages of social evolution; ....this struggle, however, has now reached a stage where the exploited and oppressed class (the proletariat) can no longer emancipate itself from the class which exploits and oppresses it (the bourgeoisie), without at the same time forever freeing the whole of society from exploitation, oppression and class struggles." (Preface to the German edition of the *Communist Manifesto*—Karl Marx, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Moscow, 1946, Vol. 1, pp. 100-01).

d) *The third feature* of production is that the rise of new productive forces and of the relations of production corresponding to them does not take place separately from the old system, after the disappearance of the old system, but within the old system; it takes place not as a result of the deliberate and conscious activity of man, but spontaneously, unconsciously, independently of the will of man. It takes place spontaneously and independently of the will of man for two reasons.

Firstly, because men are not free to choose one mode of production or another, because as every new generation enters life it finds productive forces and relations of production already existing as the result of the work of former generations, owing to which it is obliged at first to accept and adapt itself to everything it finds ready made in the sphere of production in order to be able to produce material values.

Secondly, because, when improving one instrument of production or another, one element of the productive forces or another, men do not realize, do not understand or stop to reflect what *social* results these improvements will lead to, but only think of their everyday interests, of lightening their labour and of securing some direct and tangible advantage for themselves.

When, gradually and gropingly, certain members of primitive communal society passed from the use of stone tools to the use of iron tools, they, of course, did not know and did not stop to reflect what *social* results this innovation would lead to ; they did not understand or realize that the change to metal tools meant a revolution in production, that it would in the long run lead to the slave system. They simply wanted to lighten their labour and secure an immediate and tangible advantage ; their conscious activity was confined within the narrow bounds of this everyday personal interest.

When, in the period of the feudal system, the young bourgeoisie of Europe began to erect, alongside of the small guild workshops, large manufactories, and thus advanced the productive forces of society, it, of course, did not know and did not stop to reflect what *social* consequences this innovation would lead to ; it did not realize or understand that this "small" innovation would lead to a regrouping of social forces which was to end in a revolution both against the power of kings, whose favours it so highly valued, and against the nobility, to whose ranks its foremost representatives not infrequently aspired. It simply wanted to lower the cost of producing goods, to throw larger quantities of goods on the markets of Asia and of recently discovered America, and to make bigger profits. Its conscious activity was confined within the narrow bounds of this commonplace practical aim.

When the Russian capitalists, in conjunction with foreign capitalists, energetically implanted modern large-scale machine industry in Russia, while leaving tsardom intact and turning the peasants over to the tender mercies of the landlords, they, of course, did not know and did not stop to reflect what *social* consequences this extensive growth of productive forces would lead to ; they did not realize or understand that this big leap in the realm of the productive forces of society would lead to a regrouping of social forces that would enable the proletariat to effect a union with the peasantry and to bring about a victorious Socialist revolution. They simply wanted to expand industrial production to the limit, to gain control of the huge home market, to become monopolists, and to squeeze as much profit as possible out of the national economy. Their conscious activity did not extend beyond their commonplace, strictly practical interests.

Accordingly, Marx says:

> "In the social production of their life, [that is, in the production of the material values necessary to the life of men—*Ed.*] men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and *independent** of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material forces of production." (Karl Marx, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Moscow 1946, Vol. I, p. 300.)

This, however, does not mean that changes in the relations of production, and the transition from old relations of production to new relations of production proceed smoothly, without conflicts, without upheavals. On the contrary, such a transition usually takes place by means of the revolutionary overthrow of the old relations of production and the establishment of new relations of production. Up to a certain period the development of the productive forces and the changes in the realm of the relations of production proceed spontaneously, independently of the will of men. But that is so only up to a certain moment, until the new and developing productive forces have reached a proper state of maturity. After the new productive forces have matured, the existing relations of production and their upholders—the ruling classes—become that "insurperable" obstacle which can only be removed by the conscious action of the new classes, by the forcible acts of these classes, by revolution. Here there stands out in bold relief the *tremendous role* of new social ideas, of new political institutions, of a new political power, whose mission it is to abolish by force the old relations of production. Out of the conflict between the new productive forces and the old relations of production, out of the new economic demands of society, there arise new social ideas; the new ideas organize and mobilize the masses; the masses become welded into a new political army, create a new revolutionary power, and make use of it to abolish by force the old system of relations of production, and to firmly establish the new system. The spontaneous process of development yields place to the conscious actions of men, peaceful development to violent upheaval, evolution to revolution.

> "The proletariat," says Marx, "during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class. . . . by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such,

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* Our italics.—*Ed.*

sweeps away by force the old conditions of production." (*The Communist Manifesto*—Karl Marx, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Moscow 1946, Vol. I, p. 131.)

And further :

—"The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state, *i.e.,* of the proletariat organized as the ruling class, and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible. (*Ibid.,* p. 129.)

—"Force is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one." (Karl Marx, *Capital,* Vol. 1. p. 776.)

Here is the formulation—a formulation of genius—of the essence of historical materialism given by Marx in 1859 in his historic Preface to his famous book, *Critique of Political Economy :*

"In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will ; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material forces of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been at work before. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness ; on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social productive forces and the relations of production. No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed ; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of

> their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself. Therefore, mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the task itself arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation." (Karl Marx, *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., Moscow 1946, Vol 1, pp. 300-01.)

Such is Marxist materialism as applied to social life, to the history of society.

Such are the principal features of dialectical and historical materialism.

It will be seen from this what a theoretical treasure was safeguarded by Lenin for the Party and protected from the attacks of the revisionists and renegades, and how important was the appearance of Lenin's book, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism,* for the development of our Party.

Concerning Marxism in Linguistics

A group of younger comrades have asked me to give my opinion in the press on problems relating to linguistics, particularly in reference to Marxism in linguistics. I am not a linguistic expert and, of course, cannot fully satisfy the request of the comrades. As to Marxism in linguistics, as in other social sciences, this is something directly in my field. I have therefore consented to answer a number of questions put by the comrades.

QUESTION. *Is it true that language is a superstructure on the base?*

ANSWER. No, it is not true.

The base is the economic structure of society at the given stage of its development. The superstructure is the political, legal, religious, artistic, philosophical views of society and the political, legal and other institutions corresponding to them.

Every base has its own corresponding superstructure. The base of the feudal system has its superstructure, its political, legal and other views, and the corresponding institutions ; the capitalist base has its own superstructure, so has the socialist base. If the base changes or is eliminated, then, following this, its superstructure changes or is eliminated ; if a new base arises, then, following this, a superstructure arises corresponding to it.

In this respect language radically differs from the superstructure. Take, for example, Russian society and the Russian language. In the course of the past thirty years the old, capitalist base has been eliminated in Russia and a new, socialist base has been built. Correspondingly, the superstructure on the capitalist base has been eliminated and a new superstructure created corresponding to the socialist base. The old political, legal and other institutions, consequently, have been supplanted by new, socialist institutions. But in spite of this the Russian language has remained basically what it was before the October Revolution.

What has changed in the Russian language in this period? To a certain extent the vocabulary of the Russian language has changed, in the sense that it has been replenished with a considerable number of new words and expressions, which have arisen in connection with the rise of the new socialist production, the appearance of a new state, a new socialist culture, new social relations and morals, and, lastly, in connection with the development of technology and science ; a number of words and expressions have changed their meaning, have acquired a new signification ; a number of obsolete words have dropped out of the vocabulary. As to the basic stock of words and the grammatical system of the Russian language, which constitute the foundation of a language, they, after the elimination of the capitalist base, far from having been eliminated and supplanted by a new basic word stock and a new grammatical system of the language, have been preserved in their entirety and have not undergone any serious changes—they have been preserved precisely as the foundation of the modern Russian language.

Further, the superstructure is a product of the base, but this by no means implies that it merely reflects the base, that it is passive, neutral, indifferent to the fate of its base, to the fate of the classes, to the character of the system. On the contrary, having come into being, it becomes an exceedingly active force, actively assisting its base to take shape and consolidate itself, and doing its utmost to help the new system to finish off and eliminate the old base and the old classes.

It cannot be otherwise. The superstructure is created by the base precisely in order to serve it, to actively help it to take shape and consolidate itself, to actively fight for the elimination of the old, moribund base together with its old superstructure. The superstructure has only to renounce this role of auxiliary, it has only to pass from a position of active defence of its base to one of indifference towards it, to adopt an equal attitude to all classes, and it loses its virtue and ceases to be a superstructure.

In this respect language radically differs from the superstructure. Language is not a product of one or another base, old or new, within the given society, but of the whole course of the history of the society and of the history of the bases for many centuries. It was created not by some one class, but by the entire society, by all the classes of the society, by the efforts of hundreds of generations. It was created for the satisfaction of the needs not of one particular class, but of the entire society, of all the classes of the society. Precisely for this reason it was created as a single language for the society, common to all members of that society, as the common language of the whole people. Hence the functional role of language, as a means of intercourse between people, consists not in serving one class to the detriment of other classes, but in equally serving the entire society, all the classes of society. This in fact explains why a language may equally serve both the old, moribund system and the new, rising system ; both the old base and the new base ; both the exploiters and the exploited.

It is no secret to anyone that the Russian language served Russian capitalism and Russian bourgeois culture before the October Revolution just as well as it now serves the socialist system and socialist culture of Russian society.

The same must be said of the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Uzbek, Kazakh, Georgian, Armenian, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Moldavian, Tatar, Azerbaijanian, Bashkirian, Turkmenian and other languages of the Soviet nations ; they served the old, bourgeois system of these nations just as well as they serve the new, socialist system.

It cannot be otherwise. Language exists, language has been created precisely in order to serve society as a whole, as a means of intercourse between people, in order to be common to the members of society and constitute the single language of society, serving members of society equally, irrespective of their class status. A language has only to depart from this position of being a language common to the whole people, it has only to give preference and support to some one social group to the detriment of other social groups of the society, and it loses its virtue, ceases to be a means of intercourse between the people of the society, and becomes the jargon of some social group, degenerates and is doomed to disappear.

In this respect, while it differs in principle from the superstructure, language does not differ from instruments of production, from machines, let us say, which are as indifferent to classes as is language and may, like it, equally serve a capitalist system and a socialist system.

Further, the superstructure is the product of one epoch, the epoch in which the given economic base exists and operates. The superstructure is therefore short-lived ; it is eliminated and disappears with the elimination and disappearance of the given base.

Language, on the contrary, is the product of a whole number of epochs, in the course of which it takes shape, is enriched, develops and is smoothened. A language therefore lives immeasurably longer than any base or any superstructure. This in fact explains why the rise and elimination not only of one base and its superstructurte, but of several bases and their corresponding superstructures, have not led in history to the elimination of a given language, to the elimination of its structure and the rise of a new language with a new stock of words and a new grammatical system.

It is more than a hundred years since Pushkin died. In this period the feudal system and the capitalist system were eliminated in Russia, and a third, a socialist system has arisen. Hence two bases, with their superstructuree, were eliminated, and a new, socialist base has arisen, with its new superstructure. Yet, if we take the Russian language, for example, it has not in this long span of time undergone any fundamental change, and the modern Russian language differs very little in structure from the language of Pushkin.

What has changed in the Russian language in this period? The Russian vocabulary has in this period been greatly replenished ; a large number of obsolete words have dropped out of the vocabulary ; the meaning of a great many words has changed ; the grammatical system of the language has improved. As to the structure of Pushkin's language, with its grammatical system and its basic stock of words, in all essentials it has remained as the basis of modern Russian.

And this is quite understandable. Indeed, what necessity is there, after every revolution, for the existing structure of the language, its grammatical system and basic stock of words to be destroyed and supplanted by new ones, as is usually the case with the superstructure? What object would there be in calling "water," "earth," "mountain," "forest," "fish," "man," "to walk," "to do," "to produce," "to trade," etc., not water, earth, mountain, etc., but something else? What object would there be in having the modification of words in a language and the combination of words in sentences follow not the existing grammar, but some entirely different grammar? What would the revolution gain from such an upheaval in language? History in general never does anything of any importance without some special necessity for it. What, one asks, can be the necessity for such a linguistic revolution, if it has been demonstrated that the existing language and its structure are fundamentally quite suited to the needs of the new system? The old superstructure can and should be destroyed and replaced by a new one in the course of a few years, in order to give free scope for the development of the productive forces of society; but how can an existing language be destroyed and a new one built in its place in the course of a few years without causing anarchy in social life and without creating the threat of the disintegration of society? Who but a Don Quixote could set himself such a task?

Lastly, one other radical distinction between the superstructure and language. The superstructure is not directly connected with production, with man's productive activity. It is connected with production only indirectly, through the economy, through the base. The superstructure therefore reflects changes in the level of development of the productive forces not immediately and not directly, but only after changes in the base, through the prism of the changes wrought in the base by the changes in production. This means that the sphere of action of the superstructure is narrow and restricted.

Language, on the contrary, is connected with men's productive activity directly, and not only with man's productive activity, but with all his other activity in all his spheres of work, from production to the base, and from the base to the superstructure. For this reason language reflects changes in production immediately and directly, without waiting for changes in the base. For this reason the sphere of action of language, which embraces all fields of man's activity, is far broader and more comprehensive than the sphere of action of the superstructure. More, it is practically unlimited.

It is this that primarily explains why language, or rather its vocabulary, is in a state of almost constant change. The continuous development of industry and agriculture, of trade and transport, of technology and science, demands that language should replenish its vocabulary with new words and expressions needed for their functioning. And language, directly reflecting these needs, does replenish its vocabulary with new words, and perfects its grammatical system.

Hence:

a) A Marxist cannot regard language as a superstructure on the base;

b) To confuse language and superstructure is to commit a serious error.

QUESTION. *Is it true that language always was and is class language, that there is no such thing as language which is the single and common language of a society, a non-class language common to the whole people?*

ANSWER. No, it is not true.

It is not difficult to understand that in a society which has no classes there can be no such thing as a class language. There were no classes in the primitive communal clan system, and consequently there could be no class language—the language was then the single and common language of the whole community. The objection that the concept class should be taken as covering every human community, including the primitive communal community, is not an objection but a playing with words that is not worth refuting.

As to the subsequent development from clan languages to tribal languages, from tribal languages to the languages of nationalities, and from the languages of nationalities to national languages—everywhere and at all stages of development, language, as a means of intercourse between the people of a society, was the common and single language of that society, serving its members equally, irrespective of their social status.

I am not referring here to the empires of the slave and mediaeval periods, the empires of Cyrus or Alexander the Great, let us say, or of Caesar or Charles the Great, which had no economic foundations of their own and were transient and unstable military and administrative associations. Not only did these empires not have, they could not have had a single language common to the whole empire and understood by all the members of the empire. They were conglomerations of tribes and nationalities, each of which lived its own life and had its own language. Consequently, it is not these or similar empires I have in mind, but the tribes and nationalities composing them, which has their own economic foundations and their own languages, evolved in the distant part. History tells us that the languages of these tribes and nationalities were not class languages, but languages common to the whole of a tribe or nationality, and understood by all its people.

Side by side with this, there were, of course, dialects, local vernaculars, but they were dominated by and subordinated to the single and common language of the tribe or nationality.

Later, with the appearance of capitalism, the elimination of feudal division and the formation of national markets, nationalities developed into nations, and the languages of nationalities into national languages. History shows that national languages are not class, but common languages, common to all the members of each nation and constituting the single language of that nation.

It has been said above that language, as a means of intercourse between the people of a society, serves all classes of society equally, and in this respect displays what may be called an indifference to classes. But people, the various social groups, the classes, are far from being indifferent to language. They strive to utilize the language in their own interests, to impose their own special lingo, their own special terms, their own special expressions upon it. The upper strata of the propertied classes, who have divorced themselves from and detest the people—the aristocratic nobility, the upper strata of the bourgeoisie—particularly distinguish themselves in this respect. "Class" dialects, jargons, high-society "languages" are created. These dialects and jargons are often incorrectly referred to in literature as languages—the "aristocratic language" or the "bourgeois language" in contradistinction to the "proletarian language" or the "peasant language." For this reason, strange as it may seem, some of our comrades have come to the conclusion that national language is a fiction, and that only class languages exist in reality.

There is nothing, I think, more erroneous than this conclusion. Can these dialects and jargons be regarded as languages? Certainly not. They cannot, firstly, because these dialects and jargons have no grammatical systems or basic word stocks of their own—they borrow them from the national language. They cannot, secondly, because these dialects and jargons are confined to a narrow sphere, are current only among the upper strata of a given class and are entirely unsuitable as a means of human intercourse for society as a whole. What, then, have they? They have a collection of specific words reflecting the specific tastes of the aristocracy or the upper strata of the bourgeoisie; a certain number of expressions and turns of phrase distinguished by refinement and gallantry and free of the "coarse" expressions and turns of phrase of the national language; lastly, a certain number of foreign words. But all the fundamentals, that is, the overwhelming majority of the words and the grammatical system, are borrowed from the common, national language. Dialects and jargons are therefore offshoots of the common national language, devoid of all linguistic independence and doomed to stagnation. To believe that dialects and jargons can develop into independent languages capable of ousting and supplanting the national language means losing one's sense of historical perspective and abandoning the Marxist position.

References are made to Marx, and the passage from his article *St. Max* is quoted which says that the bourgeois have "their own language", that this language "is a product of the bourgeoisie"[42], that it is permeated with the spirit of mercantilism and huckstering. Certain comrades cite this passage with the idea of proving that Marx believed in the "class character" of language and denied the existence of a single national language. If these comrades were impartial, they should have cited another passage from this same article *St. Max,* where Marx, touching on the ways single national languages arose, speaks of "the concentration of dialects into a single national language resulting from economic and political concentration."[43]

Marx, consequently, did recognize the necessity of a *single* national language, as a higher form, to which dialects, as lower forms, are subordinate.

What, then, can this bourgeois language be which Marx says "is a product of the bourgeoisie"? Did Marx consider it as much a language as the national language, with a specific linguistic structure of its own? Could he have considered it such a language? Of course, not. Marx merely wanted to say that the bourgeois had polluted the single national language with their hucksters' lingo, that the bourgeois, in other words, have their hucksters' jargon.

It thus appears that these comrades have misrepresented Marx. And they misrepresented him because they quoted Marx not like

Marxists but like dogmatists, without delving into the essence of the matter.

References are made to Engels, and the words from his *The Condition of the Working Class in England* are cited where he says that in Britain ". . . the working class has gradually become a race wholly apart from the English bourgeoisie," that "the workers speak other dialects, have other thoughts and ideals, other customs and moral principles, a different religion and other politics than those of the bourgeoisie."[44] Certain comrades conclude from this passage that Engels denied the necessity of a common, national language, that he believed, consequently, in the "class character" of language. True, Engels speaks here of dialects, not languages, fully realizing that, being an offshoot of the national language, a dialect cannot supplant the national language. But apparently, these comrades regard the existence of a difference between a language and a dialect with no particular enthusiasm. . . .

It is obvious that the quotation is inappropriate, because Engles here speaks not of "class languages" but chiefly of class thoughts, ideals, customs, moral principles, religion, politics. It is perfectly true that the thoughts, ideals, customs, moral principles, religion and politics of bourgeois and proletarians are directly antithetical. But what has this to do with national language, or the "class character" of language? Can the existence of class antagonisms in society serve as an argument in favour of the "class character" of language, or against the necessity of a single national language? Marxism says that a common language is one of the cardinal earmarks of a nation, although knowing very well that these are class antagonisms within the nation. Do the comrades referred to recognize this Marxist thesis?

References are made to Lafargue,[45] and it is said that in his pamphlet *The French Language Before and After the Revolution* he recognizes the "class character" of language and denies the necessity of a national language common to the whole people. That is not true. Lafargue does indeed speak of a "noble" or "aristocratic language" and of the "jargons" of various strata of society. But these comrades forget that Lafargue, who was not interested in the difference between languages and jargons and referred to dialects now as "artificial languages," now as "jargons," definitely says in this pamphlet that "the artificial language which distinguished the aristocracy . . . arose out of the language common to the whole people, which was spoken both by bourgeois and artisan, by town and country."

Consequently, Lafargue recognizes the existence and necessity of a common language of the whole people, and fully realizes that the "aristocratic language" and other dialects and jargons are subordinate to and dependent on the language common to the whole people.

It follows that the reference to Lafargue is wide of the mark.

References are made to the fact that at one time in England the feudal lords spoke "for centuries" in French, while the English people spoke English, and this is alleged to be an argument in favour of the "class character" of language and against the necessity of a language common to the whole people. But this is not an argument, it is rather an anecdote. Firstly, not all the feudal lords spoke French at that time, but only a small upper stratum of English feudal lords attached to the court and at county seats. Secondly, it was not some "class language" they spoke, but the ordinary language common to all the French people. Thirdly, we know that in the course of time this French language fad disappeared without a trace, yielding place to the English language common to the whole people. Do these comrades think that the English feudal lords "for centuries" held intercourse with the English people through interpreters, that they did not use the English language, that there was no language common to all the English at that time, and that the French language in England was then anything more than the language of high society, current only in the restricted circle of the upper English aristocracy? How can one possibly deny the existence and the necessity of a language common to the whole people on the basis of anecdotic "arguments" like these?

There was a time when Russian aristocrats at the tsar's court and in high society also made a fad of the French language. They prided themselves on the fact that when they spoke Russian they often lapsed into French, that they could only speak Russian with a French accent. Does this mean that there was no Russian language common to the whole people at that time in Russia, that a language common to the whole people was a fiction, and "class languages" a reality?

Our comrades are here committing at least two mistakes.

The first mistake is that they confuse language with superstructure. They think that since the superstructure has a class character, language too must be a class language, and not a language common to the whole people. But I have already said that language and superstructure are two different concepts, and that a Marxist must not confuse them.

The second mistake of these comrades is that they conceive the opposition of interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the fierce class struggle between them, as meaning the disintegration of society, as a break of all ties between the hostile classes. They believe that, since society has disintegrated and there is no longer a single society, but only classes, a single language of society, a national language, is unnecessary. If society has disintegrated and there is no longer a language common to the whole people, a national language, what remains ? There remain classes and "class languages." Naturally every "class language" will have its "class" grammar—a "proletarian" grammar or a "bourgeois" grammar. True, such grammars do not exist anywhere. But that does not worry these comrades : they believe that such grammars will appear in due course.

At one time there were "Marxists" in our country who asserted that the railways left to us after the October Revolution were bourgeois railways, that it would be unseemly for us Marxists to use them, that they should be torn up and new, "proletarian" railways built. For this they were nick-named "troglodytes". . . .

It goes without saying that such a primitive-anarchist view of society, of classes, of language has nothing in common with Marxism. But it undoubtedly exists and continues to prevail in the minds of certain of our muddled comrades.

It is of course wrong to say that, because of the existence of a fierce class struggle, society has split up into classes which are no longer economically connected with one another in one society. On the contrary, as long as capitalism exists, the bourgeois and the proletarians will be bound together by every economic thread as parts of a single capitalist society. The bourgeois cannot live and enrich themselves unless they have wage-labourers at their command ; the proletarians cannot survive unless they hire themselves to the capitalists. If all economic ties between them were to cease, it would mean the cessation of all production, and the cessation of all production would mean the doom of society, the doom of the classes themselves. Naturally, no class wants to incur self-destruction. Consequently, however, sharp the class struggle may be, it cannot lead to the disintegration of society. Only ignorance of Marxism and complete failure to understand the nature of language could have suggested to some of our comrades the fairy-tale about the disintegration of society, about "class" languages, and "class" grammars.

Reference is further made to Lenin, and it is pointed out that Lenin recognized the existence of two cultures under capitalism—bourgeois and proletarian—and that the slogan of national culture under capitalism is a nationalist slogan. All this is true and Lenin is absolutely right here. But what has this to do with the "class character" of language? When these comrades refer to what Lenin said about two cultures under capitalism, it is evidently with the idea of suggesting to the reader that the existence of two cultures, bourgeois and proletarian, in society means that there must also be two languages, inasmuch as language is linked with culture—and, consequently, that Lenin denies the necessity of a single national language, and, consequently, that Lenin beliveves in "class" languages. The mistake these comrades make here is that they identify and confuse language with culture. But culture and language are two different things. Culture may be bourgeois or socialist, but language, as a means of intercourse, is always a language common to the whole people and can serve both bourgeois and socialist culture. Is it not a fact that the Russian, the Ukrainian, the Uzbek languages are now serving the socialist culture of these nations just as well as they served their bourgeois cultures before the October Revolution? Consequently, these comrades are profoundly mistaken when they assert that the existence of two different cultures leads to the formation of two different languages and to the negation of the necessity of a single language.

When Lenin spoke of two cultures, he proceeded precisely from the thesis that the existence of two cultures cannot lead to the negation of a single language and to the formation of two languages, that there must be a single language. When the Bundists[46] accused Lenin of denying the necessity of a national language and of regarding culture as "non-national," Lenin, as we know, vigorously protested and declared that he was fighting against bourgeois culture, and not against national languages, the necessity of which he regarded as indisputable. It is strange that some of our comrades should be trailing in the footsteps of the Bundists.

As to a single language, the necessity of which Lenin is alleged to deny, it would be well to pay heed to the following words of Lenin:

"Language is the most important means of human intercourse. Unity of language and its unimpeded development form one of the most important conditions for genuinely free and extensive commercial intercourse appropriate to modern capitalism, for a free and broad grouping of the population in all its separate classes."[47]

It follows that our highly respected comrades have misrepresented the views of Lenin.

Reference, lastly, is made to Stalin. The passage from Stalin is quoted which says that "the bourgeoisie and its nationalist parties were and remain in this period the chief directing force of such nations."[48] This is all true. The bourgeoisie and its nationalist party really do direct bourgeois culture, just as the proletariat and its internationalist party direct proletarian culture. But what has this to do with the "class character" of language? Do not these comrades know that national language is a form of national culture, that a national language may serve both bourgeois and socialist culture? Are our comrades unaware of the well-known formula of the Marxists that the present Russian, Ukrainian, Byelo-russian and other cultures are socialist in content and national in form, i.e., in language? Do they agree with this Marxist formula?

The mistake our comrades commit here is that they do not see the difference between culture and language, and do not understand that culture changes in content with every new period in the development of society, whereas language remains basically the same through a number of periods, equally serving both the new culture and the old.

Hence:

a) Language, as a means of intercourse, always was and remains the single language of a society, common to all its members;

b) The existence of dialects and jargons does not negate but confirms the existence of a language common to the whole of the given people, of which they are offshoots and to which they are subordinate ;

c) The "class character" of language formula is erroneous and non-Marxist.

QUESTION. *What are the characteristic features of language ?*

ANSWER. Language is one of those social phenomena which operate throughout the existence of a society. It arises and develops with the rise and development of a society. It dies when the society dies. Apart from society there is no language. Accordingly, language and its laws of development can be understood only if studied in inseparable connection with the history of society, with the history of the people to whom the language under study belongs, and who are its creators and repositories.

Language is a medium, an instrument with the help of which people communicate with one another, exchange thoughts and understand each other. Being directly connected with thinking, language registers and fixes in words, and in words combined into sentences, the results of the process of thinking and achievements of man's cognitive activity, and thus makes possible the exchange of thoughts in human society.

Exchange of thoughts is a constant and vital necessity, for without it, it is impossible to co-ordinate the joint actions of people in the struggle against the forces of nature, in the struggle to produce the necessary material values ; without it, it is impossible to ensure the success of society's productive activity, and, hence, the very existence of social production becomes impossible. Consequently, without a language understood by a society and common to all its members, that society must cease to produce, must disintegrate and cease to exist as a society. In this sense, language, while it is a medium of intercourse, is at the same time an instrument of struggle and development of society.

As we know, all the words in a language taken together constitute what is known as its vocabulary. The chief thing in the vocabulary of a language is its basic stock of words, which includes also all the root words, as its kernel. It is far less extensive than the language's vocabulary, but it persists for a very long time, for centuries, and provides the language with a basis for the formation of new words. The vocabulary reflects the state of the language: the richer and more diversified the vocabulary, the richer and more developed the language.

However, by itself, the vocabulary does not constitute the language—it is rather the building material of the language. Just as in construction work the building materials do not constitute the building, although the latter cannot be constructed without them, so too the vocabulary of a language does not constitute the language itself, although no language is conceivable without it. But the vocabulary of a language assumes tremendous importance when it comes under the control of grammar, which defines the rules governing the modification of words and the combination of words into sentences, and thus makes the language a coherent and significant function. Grammar (morphology, syntax) is the collection of rules governing the modification of words and their combination into sentences. It is, therefore, thanks to grammar that it becomes possible for language to invest man's thoughts in a material linguistic integument.

The distinguishing feature of grammar is that it gives rules for the modification of words not in reference to concrete words, but to words in general, not taken concretely ; that it gives rules for the formation of sentences not in reference to particular concrete sentences—with, let us say, a concrete subject, a concrete predicate, etc.—but to all sentences in general, irrespective of the concrete form of any sentence in particular. Hence, abstracting itself, as regards both words and sentences, from the particular and concrete, grammar takes that which is common and basic in the modification of words and their combination into sentences and builds it into grammatical rules, grammatical laws. Grammar is the outcome of a process of abstraction performed by the human mind over a long period of time ; it is an indication of the tremendous achievement of thought.

In this respect grammar resembles geometry, which in giving its laws abstracts itself from concrete objects, regarding objects as bodies devoid of concreteness, and defining the relations between them not as the concrete relations of concrete objects but as the relations of bodies in general, devoid of all concreteness.

Unlike the superstructure, which is connected with production not directly, but through the economy, language is directly connected with man's productive activity, as well as with all his other activity in all his spheres of work without exception. That is why the vocabulary of a language, being the most sensitive to change, is in a state of almost constant change, and, unlike the superstructure, language does not have to wait until the base is eliminated, but makes changes in its vocabulary before the base is eliminated and irrespective of the state of the base.

However, the vocabulary of a language does not change in the way the superstructure does, that is, by abolishing the old and building something new, but by replenishing the existing vocabulary with new words which arise with changes in the social system, with the development of production, of culture, science, etc. Moreover, although a certain number of obsolete words usually drop out of the vocabulary of a language, a far larger number of new words are added. As to the basic word stock, it is preserved in all its fundamentals and is used as the basis for the vocabulary of the language.

This is quite understandable. There is no necessity to destroy the basic word stock when it can be effectively used through the course of several historical periods ; not to speak of the fact that, it being impossible to create a new basic word stock in a short time, the destruction of the basic word stock accumulated in the course of centuries would result in paralysis of the language, in the complete disruption of intercourse between people.

The grammatical system of a language changes even more slowly than its basic word stock. Elaborated in the course of epochs, and having become part of the flesh and blood of the language, the grammatical system changes still more slowly than the basic word stock. With the lapse of time it, of course, undergoes changes, becomes more perfected, improves its rules, makes them more specific and acquires new rules ; but the fundamentals of the grammatical system are preserved for a very long time, since, as history shows, they are able to serve society effectively through a succession of epochs.

Hence, grammatical system and basic word stock constitute the foundation of language, the essence of its specific character.

History shows that languages possess great stability and a tremendous power of resistance to forcible assimilation. Some historians, instead of explaining this phenomenon, confine themselves to expressing their surprise at it. But there is no reason for surprise whatsoever. Languages owe their stability to the stability of their grammatical systems and basic word stocks. The

Turkish assimilators strove for hundreds of years to mutilate, shatter and destroy the languages of the Balkan peoples. During this period the vocabulary of the Balkan languages underwent considerable change ; quite a few Turkish words and expressions were absorbed ; there were "convergencies" and "divergencies." Nevertheless, the Balkan languages held their own and survived. Why ? Because their grammatical systems and basic word stocks were in the main preserved.

It follows from all this that a language, its structure, cannot be regarded as the product of some one epoch. The structure of a language, its grammatical system and basic word stock, is the product of a number of epochs.

We may assume that the rudiments of modern language already existed in hoary antiquity, before the epoch of slavery. It was a rather simple language, with a very meagre stock of words, but with a grammatical system of its own—true, a primitive one, but a grammatical system nonetheless.

The further development of production, the appearance of classes, the introduction of writing, the rise of the state, which needed a more or less well-regulated correspondence for its administration, the development of trade, which needed a well-regulated correspondence still more, the appearance of the printing press, the development of literature—all this caused big changes in the development of language. During this time, tribes and nationalities broke up and scattered, intermingled and intercrossed ; later there arose national languages and states, revolutions took place, and old social systems were replaced by new ones. All this caused even greater changes in language and its development.

However, it would be a profound mistake to think that language developed in the way the superstructure developed—by the destruction of that which existed and the building of something new. In point of fact, languages did not develop by the destruction of existing languages and the creation of new ones, but by extending and perfecting the basic elements of existing languages. And the transition of the language from one quality to another did not take the form of an explosion, of the destruction at one blow of the old and the creation of the new, but of the gradual and long-continued accumulation of the elements of the new quality, of the new linguistic structure, and the gradual dying away of the elements of the old quality.

It is said that the theory that languages develop by stages is a Marxist theory, since it recognizes the necessity of sudden explosions as a condition for the transition of a language from an old quality to a new. This is of course untrue, for it is difficult to find anything resembling in this theory. And if the theory of stages really does recognize sudden explosions in the history of the development of languages, so much the worse for that theory. Marxism does not recognize sudden explosions in the development of languages, the sudden death of an existing language and the sudden erection of a new language. Lafargue was wrong when he spoke of a "sudden linguistic revolution which took place between 1789 and 1794" in France (see Lafargue's pamphlet *The French Language Before and After the Revolution*). There was no linguistic revolution, let alone a sudden one, in France at that time. True enough, during that period the vocabulary of the French language was replenished with new words and expressions, a certain number of obsolete words dropped out of it, and the meaning of certain words changed—but that was all. Changes of this nature, however, by no means determine the destiny of a language. The chief thing in a language is its grammatical system and basic word stock. But far from disappearing in the period of the French bourgeois revolution, the grammatical system and basic word stock of the French language were preserved without substantial change, and not only were they preserved, but they continue to exist in the French language of today. I need hardly say that five or six years is a ridiculously small period for the elimination of an existing language and the building of a new national language ("a sudden linguistic revolution" !)—centuries are needed for this.

Marxism holds that the transition of a language from an old quality to a new does not take place by way of an explosion, of the destruction of an existing language and the creation of a new one, but by the gradual accumulation of the elements of the new quality, and hence by the gradual dying away of the elements of the old quality.

It should be said in general for the benefit of comrades who have an infatuation for explosions that the law of transition from an old quality to a new by means of an explosion is inapplicable not only to the history of the develovment of languages ; it is not always applicable to other social phenomena of a basis or superstructural character. It applies of necessity to a society divided into hostile classes. But it does not necessarily apply to a society which has no hostile classes. In a period of eight to ten years we effected a transition in the agriculture of our country from the bourgeois, individual-peasant system to the socialist, collective-farm system. This was a revolution which eliminated the old bourgeois economic system in the countryside and created a new, socialist system. But that revolution did not take place by means of an explosion, that is, by the overthrow of the existing government power and the creation of a new power, but by a gradual transition from the old bourgeois system in the countryside to a new system. And it was possible to do that because it was a revolution from above, because the revolution was accomplished on the initiative of the existing power with the support of the bulk of the peasantry.

It is said that the numerous instances of linguistic crossing in past history furnish reason to believe that when languages cross a new language is formed by means of an explosion, by a sudden transition from an old quality to a new. This is quite wrong.

Linguistic crossing cannot be regarded as the single impact of a decisive blow which produces its results within a few years. Linguistic crossing is a prolonged process which continues for hundreds of years. There can therefore be no question of explosion here.

Further, it would be quite wrong to think that the crossing of, say, two languages results in a new, third language which does not resemble either of the languages crossed and differs qualitatively from both of them. As a matter of fact one of the languages usually emerges victorious from the cross, retains its grammatical system and its basic word stock and continues to develop in accordance with its inherent laws of development, while the other language gradually loses its quality and gradually dies away.

Consequently, a cross does not result in some new, third language ; one of the languages persists, retains its grammatical system and basic word stock and is able to develop in accordance with its inherent laws of development.

True, in the process the vocabulary of the victorious language is somewhat enriched from the vanquished language, but this strengthens rather than weakens it.

Such was the case, for instance, with the Russian language, with which, in the course of historical development, the languages of a number of other peoples crossed and which always emerged the victor.

Of course, in the process the vocabulary of the Russian language was enlarged at the expense of the vocabularies of the other languages, but far from weakening, this enriched and strengthened the Russian language.

As to the specific national individuality of the Russian language, it did not suffer in the slightest, because the Russian language preserved its grammatical system and basic word stock and continued to advance and perfect itself in accordance with inherent laws of development.

There can be no doubt that the crossing theory has little or no value for Soviet linguistics. If it is true that the chief task of linguistics is to study the inherent laws of language development, it has to be admitted that the crossing theory does not even set itself this task, let alone accomplish it—it simply does not notice it, or does not understand it.

QUESTION. *Did* Pravda *act rightly in starting an open discussion on problems of linguistics?*

ANSWER. Yes, it did.

Along what lines the problems of linguistics will be settled, will become clear at the conclusion of the discussion. But it may be said already that the discussion has been very useful.

It has brought out, in the first place, that in linguistic bodies both in the centre and in the republics a regime has prevailed which is alien to science and men of science. The slightest criticism of the state of affairs in Soviet linguistics, even the most timid attempt to criticize the so-called "new doctrine" in linguistics, was persecuted and suppressed by the leading linguistic circles. Valuable workers and researchers in linguistics were dismissed from their posts or demoted for being critical of N. Y. Marr's heritage or expressing the slighest disapproval of his teachings. Linguistic scholars were appointed to leading posts not on their merits, but because of their unqualified acceptance of N. Y. Marr's theories.

It is generally recognized that no science can develop and flourish without a battle of opinions, without freedom of criticism. But this generally recognized rule was ignored and flouted in the most unceremonious fashion. There arose a close group of infallible leaders, who, having secured themselves against any possible criticism, became a law unto themselves and did whatever they pleased.

To give one example: the so-called "Baku Course" (lectures delivered by N. Y. Marr in Baku), which the author himself had rejected and forbidden to be republished, was republished nevertheless by order of this leading caste (Comrade Meshchaninov calls them "disciples" of N. Y. Marr) and included without any reservations in the list of text-books recommended to students. This means that the students were deceived, a rejected "Course" being suggested to them as a sound text-book. If I were not convinced of the integrity of Comrade Meshchaninov and the other linguistic leaders, I would say that such conduct is tantamount to sabotage.

How could this have happened ? It happened because the Arakcheyev regime[49] established in linguistics cultivates irresponsibility and encourages such arbitrary actions.

The discussion has proved to be very useful first of all because it brought this Arakcheyev regime into the light of day and smashed it to smithereens.

But the usefulness of the discussion does not end there. It not only smashed the old regime in linguistics but also brought out the incredible confusion of ideas on cardinal questions of linguistics which prevails among the leading circles in this branch of science. Until the discussion began the "disciples" of N. Y. Marr kept silence and glossed over the unsatisfactory state of affairs in linguistics. But when the discussion started silence became impossible, and they were compelled to express their opinion in the press. And what did we find ? It turned out that in N. Y. Marr's teachings there are a whole number of defects, errors, ill-defined problems and sketchy propositions. Why, one asks, have N. Y. Marr's "disciples" begun to talk about this only now, after the discussion opened ? Why did they not see to it before? Why did they not speak about it in due time openly and honestly, as befits scientists?

Having admitted "some" errors of N. Y. Marr, his "disciples," it appears, think that Soviet linguistics can only be advanced on the basis of a "rectified" version of N. Y. Marr's theory, which they consider a Marxist one. No, save us from N. Y. Marr's "Marxism"; N. Y. Marr did indeed want to be, and endeavoured to be, a Marxist, but he failel to become one. He was nothing but a simplifier and vulgarizer of Marxism similar to the "proletcultists" or the "Rappists."

N. Y. Marr introduced into linguistics the incorrect, non-Marxist formula that language is a superstructure, and got himself into a muddle and put linguistics into a muddle. Soviet linguistics cannot be advanced on the basis of an incorrect formula.

N. Y. Marr introduced into liguistics another and also incorrect and non-Marxist formula, regarding the "class chacrater" of language, and got himself into a muddle and put linguistics into a muddle. Soviet linguistics cannot be advanced on the basis of an incorrect formula which is contrary to the whole course of the history of peoples and languages.

N. Y. Marr introduced into linguistics an immodest, boastful, arrogant tone alien to Marxism and tending towards a bald and off-hand negation of everything done in linguistics prior to N. Y. Marr.

N. Y. Marr shrilly abused the comparative-historical method as "idealistic." Yet it must be said that, despite its serious shortcomings, the comparative-historical method is nevertheless better than N. Y. Marr's really idealistic four-element analysis,[50] because the former gives a stimulus to work, to a study of languages, while the latter only gives a stimulus to loll in one's arm-chair and tell fortunes in the tea-cup of the celebrated four elements.

N. Y. Marr haughtily discountenanced every attempt to study groups (families) of languages on the grounds that it was a manifestation of the "proto-language" theory.[51] Yet it cannot be denied that the linguistic affinity of nations like the Slav nations, say, is beyond question, and that a study of the linguistic affinity of these nations might be of great value to linguistics in the study of the laws of language development. The "proto-language" theory, I need hardly say, has nothing to do with it.

To listen to N. Y. Marr, and especially to his "disciples," one might think that prior to N. Y. Marr there was no such thing as the science of language, that the science of language appeared with the "new doctrine" of N. Y. Marr. Marx and Engels were much more modest : they held that their dialectical materialism was a product of the development of the sciences, including philosophy, in earlier periods.

Thus, the discussion was useful also because it brought to light ideological shortcomings in Soviet linguistics.

I think that the sooner our linguistics rids itself of N. Y. Marr's errors, the sooner will it be possible to extricate it from its present crisis.

Elimination of the Arakcheyev regime in linguistics, rejection of N. Y. Marr's errors, and the introduction of Marxism into linguistics—that, in my opinion, is the way in which Soviet linguistics could be put on a sound basis.

Pravda, June 20, 1950

Concerning Certain Problems of Linguistics

Reply to Comrade E. Krasheninnikova

Comrade Krasheninnikova,

I am answering your questions.

1. QUESTION. Your article convincingly shows that language is neither the base nor the superstructure. Would it be right to regard language as a phenomenon characteristic of both the base and the superstructure, or would it be more correct to regard language as an intermediate phenomenon?

ANSWER. Of course, characteristic of language, as a social phenomenon, is that common feature which is inherent in all social phenomena, including the base and the superstructure, namely: it serves society just as society is served by all other social phenomena, including the base and the superstructure. But this, properly speaking, exhausts that common feature which is inherent in all social phenomena. Beyond this, important distinctions begin between social phenomena.

The point is that social phenomena have, in addition to this common feature, their own specific features which distinguish them from each other and which are of primary importance for science. The specific features of the base consist in that it serves society economically. The specific features of the superstructure consist in that it serves society by means of political, legal, aesthetic and other ideas and provides society with corresponding political, legal, and other institutions. What then are the specific features of language, distinguishing it from other social phenomena? They consist in that language serves society as a means of intercourse between people, as a means for exchanging thoughts in society, as a means enabling people to understand one another and to co-ordinate joint work in all spheres of human activity, both in the sphere of production and in the sphere of economic relations, both in the sphere of politics and in the sphere of culture, both in social life and in everyday life. These specific features are characteristic only of language, and precisely because they are characteristic only of language, language is the object of study by an independent science—linguistics. If there were no such specific features of language, linguistics would lose its right to independent existence.

In brief: language cannot be included either in the category of bases or in the category of superstructures.

Nor can it be included in the category of "intermediate" phenomena between the base and the superstructure, for such "intermediate" phenomena do not exist.

But perhaps language could be included in the category of the productive forces of society, in the category, say, of instruments of production? Indeed, there does exist a certain analogy between language and instruments of production: instruments of production manifest, just as language does, a kind of indifference towards classes and can serve equally different classes of society, both old and new. Does this circumstance provide ground for including language in the category of instruments of production? No, it does not.

At one time, N. Y. Marr, seeing that his formula—"language is a superstructure on the base"—encountered objections, decided to "reshape" it and announced that "language is an instrument of production." Was N. Y. Marr right in including language in the category of instruments of production? No, he certainly was not.

The point is that the similarity between language and instruments of production ends with the analogy I have just mentioned. But, on the other hand, there is a radical difference between language and instruments of production. This difference lies in the fact that whereas instruments of production produce material wealth, language produces nothing or "produces" words only. To put it more plainly, people possessing instruments of production can produce material wealth, but those very same people, if they possess a language but not instruments of production, cannot produce material wealth. It is not difficult to see that were language capable of producing material wealth, wind-bags would be the richest men on earth.

2. QUESTION. Marx and Engels define language as "the immediate reality of thought," as "practical, . . . actual consciousness."[52] "Ideas," Marx says, "do not exist divorced from language." In what measure, in your opinion, should linguistics occupy itself with the semantic aspect of language, semantics, historical semasiology, and stylistics, or should form alone be the subject of linguistics?

ANSWER. Semantics (semasiology) is one of the important branches of linguistics. The semantic aspect of words and expressions is of serious importance in the study of language. Hence, semantics (semasiology) must be assured its due place in linguistics.

However, in working on problems of semantics and in utilizing its data, its significance must in no way be over-estimated, and still less must it be abused. I have in mind certain philologists who, having an excessive passion for semantics, disregard language as "the immediate reality of thought" inseparably connected with thinking, divorce thinking from language and maintain that language is outliving its age and that it is possible to do without language.

Listen to what N. Y. Marr says:

> "Language exists only inasmuch as it is expressed in sounds; the action of thinking occurs also without being expressed. . . . Language (spoken) has already begun to surrender its functions to the latest inventions which are unreservedly conquering space, while thinking is on the up-grade, departing from its unutilized accumulations in the past and its new acquisitions, and is to oust and fully replace language. The language of the future is thinking which will be developing in technique free of natural matter. No language, even the spoken language, which is all the same connected with the standards of nature, will be able to withstand it" (see *Selected Works* by N. Y. Marr).

If we interpret this "labour-magic" gibberish into simple human language, the conclusion may be drawn that:

a) N. Y. Marr divorces thinking from language;

b) N. Y. Marr considers that communication between people can be realized without language, with the help of thinking itself, which is free of the 'natural matter" of language, free of the "standards of nature" ;

c) divorcing thinking from language and "having freed" it from the "natural matter" of language, N. Y. Marr lands into the swamp of idealism.

It is said that thoughts arise in the mind of man prior to their being expressed in speech, that they arise without linguistic material, without linguistic integument, in, so to say, a naked form. But that is absolutely wrong. Whatever thoughts arise in the human mind and at whatever moment, they can arise and exist only on the basis of the linguistic material, on the basis of language terms and phrases. Bare thoughts, free of the linguistic material, free of the "natural matter" of language, do not exist. "Language is the immediate reality of thought" (*Marx*). The reality of thought is manifested in language. Only idealists can speak of thinking not being connected with "the natural matter" of language, of thinking without language.

In brief: over-estimation of semantics and abuse of it led N. Y. Marr to idealism.

Consequently, if semantics (semasiology) is safeguarded against exaggerations and abuses of the kind committed by N. Y. Marr and some of his "disciples," semantics can be of great benefit to linguistics.

3. QUESTION. You quite justly say that the ideas, concepts, customs and moral principles of the bourgeoisie and those of the proletariat are directly antithetical. The class character of these phenomena is certainly reflected in the semantic aspect of language (and sometimes in its form—in the vocabulary—as is correctly pointed out in your article). In analyzing concrete linguistic material and, in the first place, the semantic aspect of language, can we speak of the class essence of the concepts expressed by language, particularly in those cases when language expresses not only the thought of man but also his attitude towards reality, where his class affinity manifests itself with especial clarity ?

ANSWER. Putting it more briefly, you want to know whether classes influence language, whether they introduce into language their specific words and expressions, whether there are cases when people attach a different meaning to one and the same word or expression depending on their class affinity?

Yes, classes influence language, introduce into the language their own specific words and expressions and sometimes understand one and the same word or expression differently. There is no doubt about that.

However, it does not follow that specific words and expressions, as well as difference in semantics, can be of serious importance for the development of a single language common to the whole people, that they are capable of detracting from its significance or of changing its character.

Firstly, such specific words and expressions, as well as cases of difference in semantics, are so few in language that they hardly make up even one per cent of the entire linguistic material. Consequently, all the remaining overwhelming mass of words and expressions, as well as their semantics, are *common* to all classes of society.

Secondly, specific words and expressions with a class tinge are used in speech not according to rules of some sort of "class" grammar, which does not exist, but according to the grammatical rules of the existing language common to the whole people.

Hence, the existence of specific words and expressions and the facts of differences in the semantics of language do not refute, but, on the contrary, confirm the existence and necessity of a single language common to the whole people.

4. QUESTION. In your article you quite correctly appraise Marr as a vulgarizer of Marxism. Does this mean that the linguists, including us, the young linguists, should reject the *whole* linguistic heritage of Marr, who all the same has to his credit a number of valuable linguistic researches (Comrades Chikobava, Sanzheyev and others wrote about them during the discussion)? Approaching Marr critically, cannot we take from him what is useful and valuable?

ANSWER. Of course, the works of N. Y. Marr do not consist solely of errors. N. Y. Marr made very gross mistakes when he introduced into linguistics elements of Marxism in a distorted form, when he tried to create an independent theory of language. But N. Y. Marr has certain good and ably written works, in which he, forgetting his theoretical claims, conscientiously and, one must say, skilfully investigates individual languages. In these words one can find not a little that is valuable and instructive. Clearly, these valuable and instructive things should be taken from N. Y. Marr and utilized.

5. QUESTION. Many linguists consider *formalism* one of the main causes of the stagnation in Soviet linguistics. We should very much like to know your opinion as to what formalism in linguistics consists in and how it should be overcome.

ANSWER. N. Y. Marr and his "disciples" accuse of "formalism" all linguists who do not accept the "new doctrine" of N. Y. Marr. This of course is not serious or clever.

N. Y. Marr considered that grammar is an empty "formality," and that people who regard the grammatical system as the foundation of language are formalists. This is altogether foolish.

I think that "formalism" was invented by the authors of the "new doctrine" to facilitate their struggle against their opponents in linguistics.

The cause of the stagnation in Soviet linguistics is not the "formalism" invented by N. Y. Marr and his "disciples," but the Arakcheyev regime and the theoretical gaps in linguistics. The Arakcheyev regime was set up by the "disciples" of N. Y. Marr. Theoretical confusion was brought into linguistics by N. Y. Marr and his closest colleagues. To put an end to stagnation, both the one and the other must be eliminated. The removal of these plague spots will put Soviet linguistics on a sound basis, will lead it out on to the broad highway and enable Soviet linguistics to occupy first place in world linguistics.

June 29, 1950

Pravda, July 4, 1950

Reply To Comrades

TO COMRADE SANZHEYEV

Esteemed Comrade *Sanzheyev,*

I am replying to your letter with considerable delay, for it was only yesterday forwarded to me from the apparatus of the Central Committee.

Your interpretation of my standpoint on the question of dialects is absolutely correct.

"Class" dialects, which it would be more correct to call jargons, do not serve the mass of the people, but a narrow social upper crust. Moreover, they do not have a grammatical system or basic word stock of their own. In view of this, they cannot possibly develop into independent languages.

Local ("territorial") dialects, on the other hand, serve the mass of the people and have a grammatical system and basic word stock of their own. In view of this, some local dialects, in the process of formation of nations, may become the basis of national languages and develop into independent national languages. This was the case, for instance, with the Kursk-Orel dialect (the Kursk-Orel "speech") of the Russian language, which formed the basis of the Russian national language. The same must be said of the Poltava-Kiev dialect of the Ukrainian language, which formed the basis of the Ukrainian national language. As for the other dialects of such languages, they lose their originality, merge with those languages and disappear in them.

Reverse processes also occur, when the single language of a nationality, which has not yet become a nation owing to the absence of the necessary economic conditions of development, collapses as a result of the disintegration of the state of that nationality, and the local dialects, which have not yet had time to be fully uniformized in the single language, revive and give rise to the formation of separate independent languages. Possibly, this was the case, for example, with the single Mongolian language.

July 11, 1950

Pravda, August 2, 1950

TO COMRADES D. BELKIN AND S. FURER

I have received your letters.

Your mistake is that you have confused two different things and substituted another subject for that examined in my reply to Comrade Krasheninnikova.

1. In that reply I criticized N. Y. Marr who, dealing with language (spoken) and thought, divorces language from thought and thus lapses into idealism. Therefore, I referred in my reply to normal human beings possessing the faculty of speech. I maintained, moreover, that with such human beings thoughts can arise only on the basis of linguistic material, that bare thoughts unconnected with linguistic material do not exist among people, who possess the faculty of speech.

Instead of accepting or rejecting this thesis, you introduce anomalous human beings, people without language, deaf-mutes, who have no language at their disposal and whose thoughts, of course, cannot arise on the basis of linguistic material. As you see, this is an entirely different subject which I did not touch upon and could not have touched upon, since linguistics concerns itself with normal human beings possessing the faculty of speech and not with anomalous deaf-mutes who do not possess the faculty of speech.

You have substituted for the subject under discussion another subject that was not discussed.

2. From Comrade Belkin's letter it is evident that he places on a par the "language of words" (spoken language) and "gesture language" ("hand" language, according to N. Y. Marr). He seems to think that gesture language and the language of words are of equal significance, that at one time human society had no language of words, that "hand" language at that time played the part of the language of words which appeared later.

But if Comrade Belkin really thinks so, he is committing a serious error. Spoken language or the language of words has always been the sole language of human society capable of serving as an adequate means of intercourse between people. History does not know of a single human society, be it the most backward, that did not have its own spoken language. Ethnography does not know of a single backward tribe, be it as primitive or even more primitive than, say, the Australians or the Tierra del Fuegans of the last century, which did not have its own spoken language. In the history of mankind, spoken language has been one of the forces which helped human beings to emerge from the animal world, unite into communities, develop their faculty of thinking, organize social production, wage a successful struggle against the forces of nature and attain the stage of progress we have today.

In this respect, the significance of the so-called gesture language, in view of its extreme poverty and limitations, is negligible. Properly speaking, this is not a language, and not even a linguistic substitute that could in one way or another replace spoken language, but an auxiliary means of extremely limited possibilities to which man sometimes resorts to emphasize this or that point in his speech. Gesture language and spoken language are just as incomparable as are the primitive wooden hoe and the modern caterpillar tractor with its five-furrow plough or tractor row drill.

3. Apparently, you are primarily interested in the deaf-mutes, and only secondarily in problems of linguistics. Evidently, it was precisely this circumstance that prompted you to put a number of questions to me. Well, if you insist, I am not averse to granting your request. How do matters stand with regard to deaf-mutes? Do they possess the faculty of thinking? Do thoughts arise with them? Yes, they possess the faculty of thinking and thoughts arise with them. Clearly, since deaf-mutes are deprived of the faculty of speech, their thoughts cannot arise on the basis of linguistic material. Can this be taken to mean that the thoughts of deaf-mutes are naked, are not connected with the "standards of nature" (N. Y. Marr's expression)? No, it cannot. The thoughts of deaf-mutes arise and can exist only on the basis of the images, sensations and conceptions they form in every-day life on the objects of the outside world and their relations among themselves, thanks to the senses of sight, of touch, taste, and smell. Apart from these images, sensations and conceptions, thought is empty, is deprived of all content, that is, it does not exist.

July 22, 1950

Pravda, August 2, 1950

TO COMRADE A. KHOLOPOV

I have received your letter.

Pressure of work has somewhat delayed my reply.

Your letter tacitly proceeds from two premises: from the premise that it is permissible to quote the work of this or that author *apart* from the historical period of which the quotation treats, and secondly, from the premise that this or that conclusion or formula of Marixism, derived as a result of studying one of the periods of historical development, holds good for all periods of development and therefore must remain *invariable.*

I must say that both these premises are deeply mistaken.

A few examples.

1. In the forties of the past century when there was no monopoly capitalism as yet, when capitalism was developing more or less smoothly along an ascending line, spreading to new territories it had not yet occupied, and the law of uneven development could not yet fully operate, Marx and Engels concluded that a socialist revolution could not be victorious in one particular country, that it could be victorious only as a result of a joint blow in all, or in most, civilized countries. This conclusion subsequently became a guiding principle for all Marxists.

However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, especially in the period of the first world war, when it became clear to everyone that pre-monopoly capitalism had definitely developed into monopoly capitalism, when rising capitalism had become dying capitalism, when the war had revealed the incurable weaknesses of the world imperialist front, and the law of uneven development predetermined that the proletarian revolution would mature in different countries at different times, Lenin, proceeding from Marxist theory, came to the conclusion that in the new conditions of development, the socialist revolution could fully prove victorious in one country taken separately, that the simultaneous victory of the socialist revolution in all countries, or in a majority of civilized countries, was impossible owing to the uneven maturing of the revolution in those countries, that the old formula of Marx and Engels no longer correspond to the new historical conditions.

It is evident that here we have two different conclusions on the question of the victory of socialism, which not only contradict, but exclude each other.

Some textualists and Talmudists who quote mechanically without delving into the essence of the matter, and apart from historical conditions, may say that one of these conclusions should be discarded as being absolutely incorrect, while the other conclusion, as the absolutely correct one, should be applied to all periods of development. Marxists, however, cannot but know that the textualists and Talmudists are mistaken; they cannot but know that both of these conclusions are correct, though not absolutely, each being correct for its own time: Marx's and Engels' conclusion — for the period of pre-monopoly capitalism; and Lenin's conclusion — for the period of monopoly capitalism.

2. Engels in his *Anti-Dühring* said that after the victory of the socialist revolution, the state is bound to wither away. On these grounds, after the victory of the socialist revolution in our country, textualists and Talmudists in our Party began demanding that the Party should take steps to ensure the speedy withering away of our state, to disband state organs, to give up a standing army.

However, the study of the world situation of our time led Soviet Marxists to the conclusion that in the conditions of capitalist encirclement, when the socialist revolution has been victorious only in one country, and capitalism reigns in all other countries, the land of the victorious revolution should not weaken, but in every way strengthen its state, state organs, intelligence organs and army, if that land does not want to be crushed by the capitalist encirclement. Russian Marxists came to the conclusion that Engels' formula has in view the victory of socialism in all, or in most, countries, that it cannot be applied in the case where socialism is victorious in one country taken separately and capitalism reigns in all the other countries.

Evidently, we have here two different formulas regarding the destiny of the socialist state, each formula excluding the other.

The textualists and Talmudists may say that this circumstance creates an intolerable situation, that one of these formulas must be discarded as being absolutely erroneous, and the other — as the absolutely correct one — must be applied to all periods of development of the socialist state. Marxists, however, cannot but know that the textualists and Talmudists are mistaken, for both these formulas are correct, though not absolutely, each being correct for its time ; the formula of Soviet Marxists — for the period of the victory of socialism in one or several countries ; and the formula of Engels — for the period when the consecutive victory of socialism in separate countries will lead to the victory of socialism in the majority of countries and when the necessary conditions will thus have been created for the application of Engels' formula.

The number of such examples could be multiplied.

The same must be said of the two different formulas on the question of language, taken from various works of Stalin and cited by Comrade Kholopov in his letter.

Comrade Kholopov refers to Stalin's work *Concerning Marxism in Linguistics,* where the conclusion is drawn that, as a result of the crossing, say, of two languages, one of them usually emerges victorious, while the other dies away, that, consequently, crossing does not produce some new, third language, but preserves one of the languages. He refers further to another conclusion, taken from Stalin's report to the Sixteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), where it is said that in the period of the victory of socialism on a world scale, when socialism is consolidated and becomes part of every-day life, national languages will inevitably merge into one common language which, of course, will be neither Great Russian nor German, but something new. Comparing these two formulas and seeing that, far from coinciding, they exclude each other, Comrade Kholopov falls into despair. "From your article," he writes in his letter, "I understood that the crossing of languages can *never* produce some new language, whereas prior to your article I was firmly convinced, in conformity with your speech at the Sixteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), that under *communism,* languages would merge into one common language."

Evidently, having discovered a contradiction between these two formulas and being deeply convinced that the contradiction must be removed, Comrade Kholopov considers it necessary to get rid of one of these formulas as incorrect and to clutch at the other as being correct for all periods and countries ; but which formula to clutch at — he does not know. The result is something in the nature of a hopeless situation. Comrade Kholopov does not even suspect that both formulas can be correct — each for its own time.

That is always the case with textualists and Talmudists who do not delve into the essence of the matter, quote mechanically and irrespective of the historical conditions of which the quotations treat, and invariably find themselves in a hopeless situation.

Yet if one examines the essence of the matter, there are no grounds for considering the situation hopeless. The fact is that Stalin's pamphlet *Concerning Marxism in Linguistics,* and Stalin's speech at the Sixteenth Party Congress, refer to two entirely different epochs, owing to which the formulas, too, prove to be different.

The formula given by Stalin in his pamphlet, in the part where it speaks of the crossing of languages, refers to the epoch *prior to the victory of socialism* on a world scale, when the exploiting classes are the dominant power in the world ; when national and colonial oppression remains in force ; when national isolation and distrust among nations are consolidated by differences between states ; when, as yet, there is no national equality of rights ; when the crossing of languages takes place as a struggle for the domination of one of the languages ; when the conditions necessary for the peaceful and friendly co-operation of nations and languages are as yet lacking ; when it is not the co-operation and mutual enrichment of languages that are on the order of the day, but the assimilation of some and the victory of other languages. It is clear that in such conditions there can be only victorious and defeated languages. It is precisely these conditions that Stalin's formula has in view when it says that the crossing, say, of two languages, results not in the formation of a new language, but in the victory of one of the languages and the defeat of the other.

As regards the other formula by Stalin, taken from his speech at the Sixteenth Party Congress, in the part that touches on the merging of languages into one common language, it has in view another epoch, namely, the epoch *after the victory of socialism* on a world scale, when world imperialism no longer exists ; when the exploiting classes are overthrown and national and colonial oppression is eradicated ; when national isolation and mutual distrust among nations is replaced by mutual confidence and rapprochement between nations ; when national equality has been put into practice ; when the policy of suppressing and assimilating languages is abolished ; when the co-operation of nations has been established, and it is possible for national languages freely to enrich one another through their co-operation. It is clear that in these conditions there can be no question of the suppression and defeat of some languages, and the victory of others. Here we shall have not two languages, one of which is to suffer defeat, while the other is to emerge from the struggle victorious, but hundreds of national languages, out of which, as a result of a prolonged economic, political and cultural co-operation of nations, there will first appear most enriched unified zonal languages, and subsequently the zonal languages will merge into a single international language, which, of course, will be neither German, nor Russian, nor English, but a new language that has absorbed the best elements of the national and zonal languages.

Consequently, the two different formulas correspond to two different epochs in the development of society, and precisely because they correspond to them, both formulas are correct—each for its epoch.

To demand that these formulas should not be at variance with each other, that they should not exclude each other, is just as absurd as it would be to demand that the epoch of the domination of capitalism should not be at variance with the epoch of the domination of socialism, that socialism and capitalism should not exclude each other.

The textualists and Talmudists regard Marxism and separate conclusions and formulas of Marxism as a collection of dogmas, which "never" change, notwithstanding changes in the conditions of the development of society. They believe that if they learn these conclusions and formulas by heart and start citing them at random, they will be able to solve any problem, reckoning that the memorized conclusions and formulas will serve them for all times and countries, for all occasions in life. But this can be the conviction only of people who see the letter of Marxism, but not its essence, who learn by rote the texts of conclusions and formulas of Marxism, but do not understand their meaning.

Marxism is the science of the laws governing the development of nature and society, the science of the revolution of the oppressed and exploited masses, the science of the victory of socialism in all countries, the science of building communist society. As a science, Marxism cannot stand still, it develops and is perfected. In its development, Marxism cannot but be enriched by new experience, new knowledge — consequently some of its formulas and conclusions cannot but change in the course of time, cannot but be replaced by new formulas and conclusions, corresponding to the new historical tasks. Marxism does not recognize invariable conclusions and formulas, obligatory for all epochs and periods. Marxism is the enemy of all dogmatism.

July 28, 1950

Pravda, August 2, 1950

Ecomomic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.

To the Participants in
the Economic Discussion

Remarks on Economic Questions Connected with the November 1951 Discussion

I have received all the materials on the economic discussion held to assess the draft textbook on political economy. The material received includes the "Proposals for the Improvement of the Draft Textbook on Political Economy." "Proposals for the Elimination of Mistakes and Inaccuracies" in the draft, and the "Memorandum on Disputed Issues."

On all these materials, as well as on the draft textbook, I consider it necessary to make the following remarks.

1. CHARACTER OF ECONOMIC LAWS UNDER SOCIALISM

Some comrades deny the objective character of laws of science, and of the laws of political economy under socialism in particular. They deny that the laws of political economy reflect law-governed processes which take place independently of the will of man. They believe that in view of the specific role assigned to the Soviet state by history, the Soviet state and its leaders can abolish existing laws of political economy and can "form," "create," new laws.

These comrades are profoundly mistaken. It is evident that they confuse laws of science, which reflect objective processes in nature or society, processes which take place independently of the will of man, with the laws which are issued by governments, which are made by the will of man, and which have only juridical validity. But they must not be confused.

Marxism regards laws of science—whether they be laws of natural science or laws of political economy—as the reflection of objective processes which take place independently of the will of man. Man may discover these laws, get to known them, study them, reckon with them in his activities and utilize them in the interests of society, but he cannot change or abolish them. Still less can he form or create new laws of science.

Does this mean, for instance, that the results of the action of the laws of nature, the results of the action of the forces of nature, are in general inavertible, that the destructive action of the forces of nature always and everywhere proceeds with an elemental and inexorable power that does not yield to the influence of man? No, it does not. Leaving aside astronomical, geological and other similar processes, which, even if he has come to know the laws of their development, man really is powerless to influence, in many other cases man is very far from powerless, in the sense of being able to influence the processes of nature. In all such cases, having come to know the laws of nature, reckoning with them and relying on them, and intelligently applying and utilizing them, man can restrict their sphere of action, and can impart a different direction to the destructive forces of nature and convert them to the use of society.

To take one of numerous examples. In olden times the overflow of big rivers, flood, and the resulting destruction of homes and crops, was considered an inavertible calamity, against which man was powerless. But with the lapse of time and the development of human knowledge, when man had learned to build dams and hydro-power stations, it became possible to protect society from the calamity of flood which had formerly seemed to be inavertible. More, man learned to curb the destructive forces of nature, to harness them, so to speak, to convert the force of water to the use of society and to utilize it for the irrigation of fields and the generation of power.

Does this mean that man has thereby abolished laws of nature, laws of science, and has created new laws of nature, new laws of science? No, it does not. The fact is that all this procedure of averting the action of the destructive forces of water and of utilizing them in the interests of society takes place without any violation, alteration or abolition of scientific laws or the creation of new scientific laws. On the contrary, all this procedure is effected in precise conformity with the laws of nature and the laws of science, since any violation, even the slightest, of the laws of nature would only upset matters and render the procedure futile.

The same must be said of the laws of economic development, the laws of political economy—whether in the period of capitalism or in the period of socialism. Here, too, the laws of economic development, as in the case of natural science, are objective laws, reflecting processes of economic development which take place independently of the will of man. Man may discover these laws, get to know them and, relying upon them, utilize them in the interests of society, impart a different direction to the destructive action of some of the laws, restrict their sphere of action, and allow fuller scope to other laws that are forcing their way to the forefront ; but he cannot destroy them or create new economic laws.

One of the distinguishing features of political economy is that its laws, unlike those of natural science, are impermanent, that they, or at least the majority of them, operate for a definite historical period, after which they give place to new laws. However, these laws are not abolished, but lose their validity owing to the new economic conditions and depart from the scene in order to give place to new laws, laws which are not created by the will of man, but which arise from the new economic conditions.

Reference is made to Engels' *Anti-Dühring,* to his formula which says that, with the abolition of capitalism and the socialization of the means of production, man will obtain control of his means of production, that he will be set free from the yoke of social and economic relations and become the "master" of his social life. Engels calls this freedom "appreciation of necessity." And what can this "appreciation of necessity" mean ? It means that, having come to know objective laws ("necessity"), man will apply them with full consciousness in the interests of society. That is why Engles says in the same book:

"The laws of his own social activity, which have hitherto confronted him as extraneous laws of nature dominating him, will then be applied by man with complete understanding, and hence will be dominated by man."

As we see, Engels' formula does not speak at all in favour of those who think that under socialism existing economic laws can be abolished and new ones created. On the contrary, it demands, not the abolition but the understanding of economic laws and their intelligent application.

It is said that economic laws are elemental in character, that their action is inavertible and that society is powerless against them. That is not true. That means making a fetish of laws, and oneself the slave of laws. It has been domonstrated that society is not powerless against laws, that, having come to know economic laws and relying upon them, society can restrict their sphere of action, utilize them in the interests of society and "harness" them, just as in the case of the forces of nature and their laws, just as in the case of the overflow of big rivers cited in illustration above.

Reference is made to the specific role of Soviet government in building socialism, which supposedly enables it to abolish existing laws of economic development and to "form" new ones. That also is untrue.

The specific role of Soviet government was due to two circumstances: first, that what Soviet government had to do was not to replace one form of exploitation by another, as was the case in earlier revolutions, but to abolish exploitation altogether; second, that in view of the absence in the country of any ready-made rudiments of a socialist economy, it had to create new, socialist forms of economy, "starting from scratch," so to speak.

That was undoubtedly a difficult, complex and unprecedented task. Nevertheless, Soviet government accomplished this task with credit. But it accomplished it not because it supposedly destroyed the existing economic laws and "formed" new ones, but only because it relied on the economic law that the relations of production *must necessarily conform* with the character of the productive forces. The productive forces of our country, especially in industry, were social in character, the form of ownership, on the other hand, was private, capitalistic. Relying on the economic law that the relations of production must necessarily conform with the character of the productive forces, the Soviet government socialized the means of production, made them the property of the whole people, and thereby abolished the exploiting system and created socialist forms of economy. Had it not been for this law, and had the Soviet government not relied upon it, it could not have accomplished its mission.

The economic law that the relations of production must necessarily conform with the character of the productive forces has long been forcing its way to the forefront in the capitalist countries.

If it has failed so far to force its way into the open, it is because it is encountering the most powerful resistance on the part of obsolescent forces of society. Here we have another distinguishing feature of economic laws. Unlike the laws of natural science, where the discovery and application of a new law proceeds more or less smoothly, the discovery and application of a new law in the economic field, affecting as it does the interests of obsolescent forces of society, meets with the most powerful resistance on their part. A force, a social force, capable of overcoming this resistance, is therefore necessary. In our country, such a force was the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, who represented the overwhelming majority of society. There is no such force yet in other, capitalist countries. This explains the secret why the Soviet government was able to smash the old forces of society, and why in our country the economic law that the relations of production must necessarily conform with the character of the productive forces received full scope.

It is said that the necessity for balanced (proportionate) development of the national economy in our country enables the Soviet government to abolish existing economic laws and to create new ones. That is absolutely untrue. Our yearly and five-yearly plans must not be confused with the objective economic law of balanced, proportionate development of the national economy. The law of balanced development of the national economy arose in contradistinction to the law of competition and anarchy of production under capitalism. It arose from the socialization of the means of production, after the law of competition and anarchy of production had lost its validity. It became operative because a socialist economy can be conducted only on the basis of the economic law of balanced development of the national economy. That means that the law of balanced development of the national economy makes it possible for our planning bodies to plan social production correctly. But *possibility* must not be confused with *actuality*. They are two different things. In order to turn the possibility into actuality, it is necessary to study this economic law, to master it, to learn to apply it with full understanding, and to compile such plans as fully reflect the requirements of this law. It cannot be said that our yearly and five-yearly plans fully reflect the requirements of this economc law.

It is said that some of the economic laws operating in our country under socialism, including the law of value, have been "transformed," or even "radically transformed," on the basis of planned economy. That is likewise untrue. Laws cannot be "transformed," still less "radically" transformed. If they can be transformed, then they can be abolished and replaced by other laws. The thesis that laws can be "transformed" is a relic of the incorrect formula that laws can be "abolished" or "formed." Although the formula that economic laws can be transformed has already been current in our country for a long time, it must be abandoned for the sake of accuracy. The sphere of action of this or that economic law may be restricted, its destructive action—that is, of course, if it is liable to be destructive—may be averted, but it cannot be "transformed" or "abolished."

Consequently, when we speak of "subjugating" natural forces or economic forces, of "dominating" them, etc., this does not mean that man can "abolish" or "form" scientific laws. On the contrary, it only means that man can discover laws, get to know them and master them, learn to apply them with full understanding, utilize them in the interests of society, and thus subjugate them, secure mastery over them.

Hence, the laws of political economy under socialism are objective laws, which reflect the fact that the processes of economic life are law-governed and take place independently of our will. People who deny this precept are in point of fact denying science, and, by denying science, they are denying all possibility of prognostication—and, consequently, are denying the possibility of directing economic activity.

It may be said that all this is correct and generally known ; but that there is nothing new in it, and that it is therefore not worth spending time reiterating generally-known truths. Of course, there really is nothing new in this ; but it would be a mistake to think that it is not worth spending time reiterating certain truths that are well known to us. The fact is that we, the leading core, are joined every year by thousands of new and young forces who are ardently desirous of assisting us and ardently desirous of proving their worth, but who do not possess an adequate Marxist education, are unfamiliar with many truths that are well known to us, and are therefore compelled to grope in the darkness. They are staggered by the colossal achievements of Soviet government, they are dazzled by the extraordinary successes of the Soviet system, and they begin to imagine that Soviet government can "do anything," that "nothing is beyond it," that it can abolish scientific laws and form new ones. What are we to do with these comrades? How are we to educate them in Marxism-Leninism? I think that systematic reiteration and patient explanation of so-called "generally-known" truths is one of the best methods of educating these comrades in Marxism.

2. COMMODITY PRODUCTION UNDER SOCIALISM

Certain comrades affirm that the Party acted wrongly in preserving commodity production after it had assumed power and nationalized the means of production in our country. They consider that the Party should have banished commodity production there and then. In this connection they cite Engels, who says:

> "The seizure of the means of production by society puts an end to commodity production, and therewith to the domination of the product over the producer." (See *Anti-Dühring.*)

These comrades are profoundly mistaken.

Let us examine Engels' formula. Engles' formula cannot be considered fully clear and precise, because it does not indicate whether it is referring to the seizure by society of *all* or only part of the means of production, that is, whether *all* or only part of the means of production are converted into public property. Hence, *this* formula of Engels' may be understood either way.

Elsewhere in *Anti-Dühring* Engles speaks of mastering *"all* the means of production," of taking possession of *"all* the means of production." Hence, in this formula Engels has in mind the nationalization not of part, but of all the means of production, that is, the conversion into public property of the means of production not only of industry, but also of agriculture.

It follows from this that Engels has in mind countries where capitalism and the concentration of production have advanced far enough both in industry and in agriculture to permit the expropriation of *all* the means of production in the country and their conversion into public property. Engels, consequently, considers that in *such* countries, parallel with the socialization of *all* the means of production, commodity production should be put an end to. And that, of course, is correct.

There was only one such country at the close of the last century, when *Anti-Dühring* was published—Britain. There the development of capitalism and the concentration of production both in industry and in agriculture had reached such a point that it would have been possible, in the event of the assumption of power by the proletariat, to convert *all* the country's means of production into public property and to put an end to commodity production.

I leave aside in this instance the question of the importance of foreign trade to Britain and the vast part it plays in her national economy. I think that only after an investigation of this question can it be finally decided what would be the future of commodity production in Britain after the proletariat had assumed power and *all* the means of production had been nationalized.

However, not only at the close of the last century, but today too, no country has attained such a degree of development of capitalism and concentration of production in agriculture as is to be observed in Britain. As to the other countries, notwithstanding the development of capitalism in the countryside, they still have a fairly numerous class of small and medium rural owner-producers, whose future would have to be decided if the proletariat should assume power.

But here is a question: what are the proletariat and its party to do in countries, ours being a case in point, where the conditions are favourable for the assumption of power by the proletariat and the overthrow of capitalism, where capitalism has so concentrated the means of production in industry that they may be expropriated and made the property of society, but where agriculture, notwithstanding the growth of capitalism, is divided up among numerous small and medium owner-producers to such an extent as to make it impossible to consider the expropriation of these producers?

To this question Engels' formula does not furnish an answer. Incidentally, it was not supposed to furnish an answer to it, since it arose from another question, namely, what should be the fate of commodity production after *all* the means of production had been socialized.

And so, what is to be done if *not all,* but only part of the means of production have been socialized, yet the conditions are favourable for the assumption of power by the proletariat—should the proletariat assume power and should commodity production be abolished immediately after this?

We cannot, of course, consider an answer the opinion of certain pseudo Marxists who believe that under such conditions the thing to do is to refrain from taking power and to wait until capitalism has succeeded in ruining the millions of small and medium producers and converting them into farm labourers and in concentrating the means of production in agriculture, and that only after this would it be possible to consider the assumption of power by the proletariat and the socialization of *all* the means of production. Naturally, this is a "solution" which Marxists cannot accept if they do not want to disgrace themselves completely.

Nor can we consider an answer the opinion of other pseudo Marxists, who think that the thing to do would be to assume power and to expropriate the small and medium rural producers and to socialize their means of production. Marxists cannot adopt this senseless and criminal course either, because it would destroy all chances of victory for the proletarian revolution, and would throw the peasantry into the camp of the enemies of the proletariat for a long time.

The answer to this question was given by Lenin in his writings on the "tax in kind" and in his celebrated "cooperative plan."

Lenin's answer may be briefly summed up as follows:

a) Favourable conditions for the assumption of power should not be missed—the proletariat should assume power without waiting until capitalism succeeded in ruining the millions of small and medium individual producers.

b) The means of production in industry should be expropriated and converted into public property ;

c) As to the small and medium individual producers, they should be gradually united in producers' cooperatives, i.e., in large agricultural enterprises, collective farms ;

d) Industry should be developed to the utmost and the collective farms should be placed on the modern technical basis of large-scale production, not expropriating them, but on the contrary generously supplying them with first-class tractors and other machines:

e) In order to ensure an economic bond between town and country, between industry and agriculture, commodity production (exchange through purchase and sale) should be preserved for a certain period, it being the form of economic tie with the town which is *alone acceptable* to the peasants, and Soviet trade—state, cooperative, and collective-farm—should be developed to the full and the capitalists of all types and descriptions ousted from trading activity.

The history of socialist construction in our country has shown that this path of development, mapped out by Lenin, has fully justified itself.

There can be no doubt that in the case of all capitalist countries with a more or less numerous class of small and medium producers, this path of development is the only possible and expedient one for the victory of socialism.

It is said that commodity production must lead, is bound to lead, to capitalism all the same, under all conditions. That is not true. Not always and not under all conditions! Commodity production must not be identified with capitalist production. They are two different things. Capitalist production is the highest form of commodity production. Commodity production leads to capitalism only *if* there is private ownership of the means of production, *if* labour power appears in the market as a commodity which can be bought by the capitalist and exploited by him in the process of production, and if, consequently, the system of exploitation of wage-workers by capitalists exists in the country. Capitalist production begins when the means of production are concentrated in private hands, and when the workers are bereft of means of production and are compelled to sell their labour power as a commodity. Without this there is no such thing as capitalist production.

Well, and what if the conditions for the conversion of commodity production into capitalist production do not exist, if the means of production are no longer private but socialist property, if the system of wage labour no longer exists and labour power is no longer a commodity, and if the system of exploitation has long been abolished—can it be considered then that commodity production will lead to capitalism all the same? No, it cannot. Yet ours is precisely such a society, a society where private ownership of the means of production, the system of wage labour, and the system of exploitation have long ceased to exist.

Commodity production must not be regarded as something sufficient unto itself, something independent of the surrounding economic conditions. Commodity production is older than capitalist production. It existed in slave-owning society, and served it, but did not lead to capitalism. It existed in feudal society and served it, yet, although it prepared some of the conditions for capitalist production, it did not lead to capitalism. Why then, one asks, cannot commodity production similarly serve our socialist society for a certain period without leading to capitalism, bearing in mind that in our country commodity production is not so boundless and all-embracing as it is under capitalist conditions, being confined within strict bounds thanks to such decisive economic conditions as social ownership of the means of production, the abolition of the system of wage labour, and the elimination of the system of exploitation?

It is said that, since the domination of social ownership of the means of production has been established in our country, and the system of wage labour and exploitation has been abolished, commodity production has lost all meaning and should therefore be done away with.

That is also untrue. Today there are two basic forms of socialist production in our country: state, or publicly-owned production, and collective-farm production, which cannot be said to be publicly owned. In the state enterprises, the means of production and the product of production are public property. In the collective farm, although the means of production (land, machines) do belong to the state, the product of production is the property of the different collective farms, since the labour, as well as the seed, is their own, while the land, which has been turned over to the collective farms in perpetual tenure, is used by them virtually as their own property, in spite of the fact that they cannot sell, buy, lease or mortgage it.

The effect of this is that the state disposes only of the product of the state enterprises, while the product of the collective farms, being their property, is disposed of only by them. But the collective farms are unwilling to alienate their products except in the form of commodities, in exchange for which they desire to receive the commodities they need. At present the collective farms will not recognize any other economic relation with the town except the commodity relation—exchange through purchase and sale. Because of this, commodity production and trade are as much a necessity with us today as they were, say, thirty years ago, when Lenin spoke of the necessity of developing trade to the utmost.

Of course, when instead of the two basic production sectors, the state sector and the collective-farm sector, there will be only one all-embracing production sector, with the right to dispose of all the consumer goods produced in the country, commodity circulation, with its "money economy," will disappear, as being an unnecessary element in the national economy. But so long as this is not the case, so long as the two basic production sectors remain, commodity production and commodity circulation must remain in force, as a necessary and very useful element in our system of national economy. How the formation of a single and united sector will come about, whether simply by the absorption of the collective-farm sector by the state sector—which is hardly likely (because that would be looked upon as the expropriation of the collective farms)—or by the setting up of a single *national* economic body (comprising representatives of state industry and of the collective farms), with the right at first to keep account of all the consumer product in the country, and eventually also to distribute it, by way, say, of products-exchange—is a special question which requires separate discussion.

Consequently, our commodity production is not of the ordinary type, but is a special kind of commodity production, commodity production without capitalists, which is concerned mainly with the goods of associated social producers (the state, the collective farms, the cooperatives), the sphere of action of which is confined to items of personal consumption, which obviously cannot possibly develop into capitalist production, and which, together with its "money economy," is designed to serve the development and consolidation of socialist production.

Absolutely mistaken, therefore, are those comrades who allege that, since socialist society has not abolished commodity forms of production, we are bound to have the reappearance of all the economic categories characteristic of capitalism: labour power as a commodity, surplus value, capital, capitalist profit, the average rate of profit, etc. These comrades confuse commodity production with capitalist production, and believe that once there is commodity production there must also be capitalist production. They do not realize that our commodity production radically differs from commodity production under capitalism.

More, I think that we must also discard certain other concepts taken from Marx's *Capital*—where Marx was concerned with an analysis of capitalism—and artificially pasted on to our social relations. I am referring to such concepts, among others, as "necessary" and "surplus" labour, "necessary" and "surplus" product, "necessary" and "surplus" time. Marx analyzed capitalism in order to elucidate the source of exploitation of the working class—surplus value—and to arm the working class, which was bereft of means of production, with an intellectual weapon for the overthrow of capitalism. It is natural that Marx used concepts (categories) which fully corresponded to capitalist relations. But it is strange, to say the least, to use these concepts now, when the working class is not only not bereft of power and means of production, but, on the contrary, is in possession of the power and owns the means of production. Talk of labour power being a commodity, and of "hiring" workers sounds rather absurd now under our system: as though the working class, which possesses means of production, hires itself and sells its labour power to itself. It is just as strange to speak now of "necessary" and "surplus" labour: as though, under our conditions, the labour contributed by the workers to society for the extension of production, the promotion of education and public health, the organization of defence, etc., is not just as necessary to the working class, now in power, as the labour expended to supply the personal needs of the worker and his family.

It should be remarked that in his *Critique of the Gotha Program,* where it is no longer capitalism that he is investigating, but, among other things, the first phase of communist society, Marx recognizes labour contributed to society for extension of production, for education and public health, for administrative expenses, for building up reserves, etc., to be just as necessary as the labour expended to supply the consumption requirements of the working class.

I think that our economists should put an end to this incongruity between the old concepts and the new state of affairs in our socialist country, by replacing the old concepts with new ones that correspond to the new situation.

We could tolerate this incongruity for a certain period, but the time has come to put an end to it.

3. THE LAW OF VALUE UNDER SOCIALISM

It is sometimes asked whether the law of value exists and operates in our country, under the socialist system.

Yes, it does exist and does operate. Wherever commodities and commodity production exist, there the law of value must also exist.

In our country, the sphere of operation of the law of value extends, first of all, to commodity circulation, to the exchange of commodities through purchase and sale, the exchange, chiefly, of articles of personal consumption. Here, in this sphere, the law of value preserves, within certain limits, of course, the function of a regulator.

But the operation of the law of value is not confined to the sphere of commodity circulation. It also extends to production. True, the law of value has no regulating function in our socialist production, but it nevertheless influences production, and this fact cannot be ignored when directing production. As a matter of fact, consumer goods, which are needed to compensate the labour power expended in the process of production, are produced and realized in our country as commodities coming under the operation of the law of value. It is precisely here that the law of value exercises its influence on production. In this connection, such things as cost accounting and profitableness, production costs, prices, etc., are of actual importance in our enterprises. Consequently, our enterprises cannot, and must not, function without taking the law of value into account.

Is this a good thing? It is not a bad thing. Under present conditions, it really is not a bad thing, since it trains our business executives to conduct product on rational lines and disciplines them. It is not a bad thing because it teaches our executives to count production magnitudes, to count them accurately, and also to calculate the real things in production precisely, and not to talk nonsense about "approximate figures," spun out of thin air. It is not a bad thing because it teaches our executives to look for, to find and to utilize hidden reserves latent in production, and not to trample them underfoot. It is not a bad thing because it teaches our executives systematically to improve methods of production, to lower production costs, to practise cost accounting, and to make their enterprises pay. It is a good practical school which accelerates the development of our executive personnel and their growth into genuine leaders of socialist production at the present stage of development.

The trouble is not that production in our country is influenced by the law of value. The trouble is that our business executives and planners, with few exceptions, are poorly acquainted with the operations of the law of value, do not study them, and are unable to take account of them in their computations. This, in fact, explains the confusion that still reigns in the sphere of price-fixing policy. Here is one of many examples. Some time ago it was decided to adjust the prices of cotton and grain in the interest of cotton growing, to establish more accurate prices for grain sold to the cotton growers, and to raise the prices of cotton delivered to the state. Our business executives and planners submitted a proposal on this score which could not but astound the members of the Central Committee, since it suggested fixing the price of a ton of grain at practically the same level as a ton of cotton, and, moreover, the price of a ton of grain was taken as equivalent to that of a ton of baked bread. In reply to the remarks of members of the Central Committee that the price of a ton of bread must be higher than that of a ton of grain, because of the additional expense of milling and baking, and that cotton was generally much dearer than grain, as was also borne out by their world market prices, the authors of the proposal could find nothing coherent to say. The Central Committee was therefore obliged to take the matter into its own hands and to lower the prices of grain and raise the prices of cotton. What would have happened if the proposal of these comrades had received legal force? We should have ruined the cotton growers and would have found ourselves without cotton.

But does this mean that the operation of the law of value has as much scope with us as it has under capitalism, and that it is the regulator of production in our country too? No, it does not. Actually, the sphere of operation of the law of value under our economic system is strictly limited and placed within definite bounds. It has already been said that the sphere of operation of commodity production is restricted and placed within definite bounds by our system. The same must be said of the sphere of operation of the law of value. Undoubtedly, the fact that private ownership of the means of production does not exist, and that the means of production both in town and country are socialized, cannot but restrict the sphere of operation of the law of value and the extent of its influence on production.

In this same direction operates the law of balanced (proportionate) development of the national economy, which has superseded the law of competition and anarchy of production.

In this same direction, too, operate our yearly and five-yearly plans and our economic policy generally, which are based on the requirements of the law of balanced development of the national economy.

The effect of all this, taken together, is that the sphere of operation of the law of value in our country is strictly limited, and that the law of value cannot under our system function as the regulator of production.

This, indeed, explains the "striking" fact that whereas in our country the law of value, in spite of the steady and rapid expansion of our socialist production, does not lead to crises of overproduction, in the capitalist countries this same law, whose sphere of operation is very wide under capitalism, does lead, in spite of the low rate of expansion of production, to periodical crises of overproduction.

It is said that the law of value is a permanent law, binding upon all periods of historical development, and that if it does lose its function as a regulator of exchange relations in the second phase of communist society, it retains at this phase of development its function as a regulator of the relations between the various branches of production as a regulator of the distribution of labour among them.

That is quite untrue. Value, like the law of value, is a historical category connected with the existence of commodity production. With the disappearance of commodity production, value and its forms and the law of value also disappear.

In the second phase of communist society, the amount of labour expended on the production of goods will be measured not in a roundabout way, not through value and its forms, as is the case under commodity production, but directly and immediately—by the amount of time, the number of hours, expended on the production of goods. As to the distribution of labour, its distribution among the branches of production will be regulated not by the law of value, which will have ceased to function by that time, but by the growth of society's demand for goods. It will be a society in which production will be regulated by the requirements of society, and computation of the requirements of society will acquire paramount importance for the planning bodies.

Totally incorrect, too, is the assertion that under our present economic system, in the first phase of development of communist society, the law of value regulates the "proportions" of labour distributed among the various branches of production.

If this were true, it would be incomprehensible why our light industries, which are the most profitable, are not being developed to the utmost, and why they are not given preference over our heavy industries, which are often less profitable, and sometimes altogether unprofitable.

If this were true, it would be incomprehensible why a number of our heavy industry plants which are still unprofitable and where the labour of the worker does not yield "proper returns," are not closed down, and why new light industry plants, which would certainly be profitable and where the labour of the workers might yield "bigger returns," are not opened.

If this were true, it would be incomprehensible why workers are not transferred from plants that are less profitable, but very necessary to our national economy, to plants which are more profitable—in accordance with the law of value, which supposedly regulates the "proportions" of labour distributed among the branches of production.

Obviously, if we were to follow the lead of these comrades, we should have to cease giving primacy to the production of means of production in favour of the production of articles of consumption. And what would be the effect of ceasing to give primacy to the production of means of production? The effect would be to destroy the possibility of the continuous expansion of our national econmy, because the national economy cannot be continuously expanded without giving primacy to the production of means of production.

These comrades forget that the law of value can be a regulator of production only under capitalism, with its private ownership of the means of production, and competition, anarchy of production, and crises of overproduction. They forget that in our country the sphere of operation of the law of value is limited by the social ownership of the means of production, and by the law of balanced development of the national economy, and is consequently also limited by our yearly and five-yearly plans, which are an approximate reflection of the requirements of this law.

Some comrades draw the conclusion from this that the law of balanced development of the national economy and economic planning annul the principle of profitableness of production. That is quite untrue. It is just the other way round. If profitableness is considered not from the standpoint of individual plants or industries, and not over a period of one year, but from the standpoint of the entire national economy and over a period of, say, ten or fifteen years, which is the only correct approach to the question, then the temporary and unstable profitableness of some plants or industries is beneath all comparison with that higher form of stable and permanent profitableness which we get from the operation of the law of balanced development of the national economy and from economic planning, which save us from periodical economic crises destructive to the national economy and causing tremendous material damage to society, and which ensure a continuous and high rate of expansion of our national economy.

In brief, there can be no doubt that under our present socialist conditions of production, the law of value cannot be a "regulator of the proportions" of labur distributed among the various branches of production.

4. ABOLITION OF THE ANTITHESIS BETWEEN TOWN AND COUNTRY, AND BETWEEN MENTAL LABOUR AND PHYSICAL LABOUR, AND ELIMINATION OF DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THEM

This heading covers a number of problems which essentially differ from one another. I combine them in one section, not in order to lump them together, but solely for brevity of exposition.

Abolition of the antithesis between town and country, between industry and agriculture, is a well-known problem which was discussed long ago by Marx and Engels. The economic basis of this antithesis is the exploitation of the country by the town, the expropriation of the peasantry and the ruin of the majority of the rural population by the whole course of development of industry, trade and credit under capitalism. Hence, the antithesis between town and country under capitalism must be regarded as an antagonism of interests. This it was that gave rise to the hostile attitude of the country towards the town and towards "townfolk" in general.

Undoubtedly, with the abolition of capitalism and the exploiting system in our country, and with the consolidation of the socialist system, the antagonism of interests between town and country, between industry and agriculture, was also bound to disappear. And that is what happened. The immense assistance rendered by the socialist town by our working class, to our peasantry in eliminating the landlords and kulaks strengthened the foundation for the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, while the systematic supply of first-class tractors and other machines to the peasantry and its collective farms converted the alliance between the working class and the peasantry into friendship between them. Of course, the workers and the collective-farm peasantry do represent two classes differing from one another in status. But this difference does not weaken their friendship in any way. On the contrary, their interests lie along one common line, that of strengthening the socialist system and attaining the victory of communism. It is not surprising, therefore, that not a trace remains of the former distrust, not to speak of the former hatred, of the country for the town.

All this means that the ground for antithesis between town and country, between industry and agriculture, has already been eliminated by our present socialist system.

This, of course, does not mean that the effect of the abolition of the antithesis between town and country will be that "the great towns will perish" (see Engels, *Anti-Dühring*). Not only will the great towns not perish, but new great towns will appear as centres of the maximum development of culture, and as centres not only of large-scale industry, but also of the processing of agricultural produce and of powerful development of all branches of the food industry. This will facilitate the cultural progress of the nation and will tend to even up conditions of life in town and country.

We have a similar situation as regards the problem of the abolition of the antithesis between mental and physical labour. This too is a well-known problem which was discussed by Marx and Engels long ago. The economic basis of the antithesis between mental and physical labour is the exploitation of the physical workers by mental workers. Everyone is familiar with the gulf which under capitalism divided the physical workers of enterprises from the managerial personnel. We know that this gulf gave rise to a hostile attitude on the part of the workers towards managers, foremen, engineers and other members of the technical staff, whom the workers regarded as their enemies. Naturally, with the abolition of capitalism and the exploiting system, the antagonism of interests between physical and mental labour was also bound to disappear. And it really has disappeared in our present socialist system. Today, the physical workers and the managerial personnel are not enemies, but comrades and friends, members of a single collective body of producers who are vitally interested in the progress and improvement of production. Not a trace remains of the former enmity between them.

Of quite a different character is the problem of the disappearance of distinctions between town (industry) and country (agriculture), and between physical and mental labour. This problem was not discussed by the Marxian classics. It is a new problem, one that has been raised practically by our socialist construction.

Is this problem an imaginary one? Has it any practical or theoretical importance for us? No, this problem cannot be considered an imaginary one. On the contrary, it is for us a problem of the greatest moment.

Take, for instance, the distinction between agriculture and industry. In our country it consists not only in the fact that the conditions of labour in agriculture differ from those in industry, but, mainly and chiefly, in the fact that whereas in industry we have public ownership of the means of production and of the product of industry, in agriculture we have not public, but group, collective-farm ownership. It has already been said that this fact leads to the preservation of commodity circulation, and that only when this distinction between industry and agriculture disappears, can commodity production with all its attendant consequences also disappear. It therefore cannot be denied that the disappearance of this essential distinction between agriculture and industry must be a matter of paramount importance for us.

The same must be said of the problem of the abolition of the essential distinction between mental labour and physical labour. It, too, is a problem of paramount importance for us. Before the socialist emulation movement assumed mass proportions, the growth of our industry proceeded very haltingly, and many comrades even suggested that the rate of industrial development should be retarded. This was due chiefly to the fact that the cultural and technical level of the workers was too low and lagged far behind that of the technical personnel. But the situation changed radically when the socialist emulation movement assumed a mass character. It was from that moment on that industry began to advance at accelerated speed. Why did socialist emulation assume the character of a mass movement? Because among the workers whole groups of comrades came to the fore who had not only mastered the minimum requirements of technical knowledge, but had gone further and risen to the level of the technical personnel; they began to correct technicians and engineers, to break down the existing norms as antiquated, to introduce new and more up-to-date norms, and so on. What should we have had if not only isolated groups, but the majority of the workers had raised their cultural and technical level to that of the engineering and technical personnel? Our industry would have risen to a height unattainable by industry in other countries. It therefore cannot be denied that the abolition of the essential distinction between mental and physical labour by raising the cultural and technical level of the workers to that of the technical personnel cannot but be of paramount importance for us.

Some comrades assert that in the course of time not only will the essential distinction between industry and agriculture, and between physical and mental labour, disappear, but so will *all* distinction between them. That is not true. Abolition of the essential distinction between industry and agriculture cannot lead to the abolition of all distinction between them. Some distinction, even if inessential, will certainly remain, owing to the difference between the conditions of work in industry and in agriculture. Even in industry the conditions of labour are not same in all its branches: the conditions of labour, for example, of coal miners differ from those of the workers of a mechanized shoe factory, and the conditions of labour of ore miners from those of engineering workers. If that is so, then all the more must a certain distinction remain between industry and agriculture.

The same must be said of the distinction between mental and physical labour. The essential distinction between them, the disparity between their cultural and technical levels, will certainly disappear. But some distinction, even if inessential, will remain, if only because the conditions of labour of the managerial staffs and those of the workers are not identical.

The comrades who assert the contrary do so presumably on the basis of the formulation given in some of my statements, which speaks of the abolition of the distinction between industry and agriculture, and between mental and physical labour, without any reservation to the effect that what is meant is the abolition of the *essential* distinction, not of all distinction. That is exactly how the comrades understood my formulation, assuming that it implied the abolition of all distinction. But this indicates that the formulation was unprecise, unsatisfactory. It must be discarded and replaced by another formulation, one that speaks of the abolition of essential distinctions and the persistence of inessential distinctions between industry and agriculture, and between mental and physical labour.

5. DISINTEGRATION OF THE SINGLE WORLD MARKET AND DEEPENING OF THE CRISIS OF THE WORLD CAPITALIST SYSTEM

The disintegration of the single, all-embracing world market must be regarded as the most important economic sequel of the Second World War and of its economic consequences. It has had the effect of further deepening the general crisis of the world capitalist system.

The Second World War was itself a product of this crisis. Each of the two capitalist coalitions which came to grips in the war calculated on defeating its adversary and gaining world supremacy. It was in this that they sought a way out of the crisis. The United States of America hoped to put its most dangerous competitors, Germany and Japan, out of action, seize foreign markets and the world's raw material resources, and establish its world supremacy.

But the war did not justify these hopes. It is true that Germany and Japan were put out of action as competitors of the three major capitalist countries ; the U.S.A., Great Britain and France. But at the same time China and other, European, people's democracies broke away from the capitalist system and, together with the Soviet Union, formed a united and powerful socialist camp confronting the camp of capitalism. The economic consequence of the existence of two opposite camps was that the single all-embracing world market disintegrated, so that now we have two parallel world markets, also confronting one another.

It should be observed that the U.S.A., and Great Britain and France, themselves contributed—without themselves desiring it, of course—to the formation and consolidation of the new, parallel world market. They imposed an economic blockade on the U.S.S.R., China and the European people's democracies, which did not join the "Marshall plan" system, thinking thereby to strangle them. The effect, however, was not to strangle, but to strengthen the new world market.

But the fundamental thing, of course, is not the economic blockade, but the fact that since the war these countries have joined together economically and established economic cooperation and mutual assistance. The experience of this cooperation shows that not a single capitalist country could have rendered such effective and technically competent assistance to the people's democracies as the Soviet Union is rendering them. The point is not only that this assistance is the cheapest possible and technically superb. The chief point is that at the bottom of this cooperation lies a sincere desire to help one another and to promote the economic progress of all. The result is a fast pace of industrial development in these countries. It may be confidently said that, with this pace of industrial development, it will soon come to pass that these countries will not only be in no need of imports from capitalist countries, but will themselves feel the necessity of selling their surplus products abroad.

But it follows from this that the sphere of exploitation of the world's resources by the major capitalist countries (U.S.A., Britain, France) will not expand, but contract ; that their opportunities for sale in the world market will deteriorate, and that their industries will be operating more and more below capacity. That, in fact, is what is meant by the deepening of the general crisis of the world capitalist system in connection with disintegration of the world market.

This is felt by the capitalists themselves, for it would be difficult for them not to feel the loss of such markets as the U.S.S.R. and China. They are trying to offset these difficulties with the "Marshall plan," the war in Korea, an arms drive, and industrial militarization. But that is very much like a drowning man clutching at a straw.

This state of affairs has confronted the economists with two questions:

a) Can it be affirmed that the thesis expounded by Stalin before the Second World War regarding the relative stability of markets in the period of the general crisis of capitalism is still valid?

b) Can it be affirmed that the thesis expounded by Lenin in the spring of 1916—namely, that, in spite of the decay of capitalism, "on the whole, capitalism is growing far more rapidly than before"—is still valid?

I think that it cannot. In view of the new conditions to which the Second World War has given rise, both these theses must be regarded as having lost their validity.

6. INEVITABILITY OF WARS BETWEEN CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

Some comrades hold that, owing to the development of new international conditions since the Second World War, wars between capitalist countries have ceased to be inevitable. They consider that the contradictions between the socialist camp and the capitalist camp are more acute than the contradictions among the capitalist countries; that the U.S.A. has brought the other capitalist countries sufficiently under its sway to be able to prevent them from going to war among themselves and weakening one another; that the foremost capitalist minds have been sufficiently taught by the two world wars and the severe damage they caused to the whole capitalist world not to venture to involve the capitalist countries in war with one another again—and that, because of all this, wars between capitalist countries are no longer inevitable.

These comrades are mistaken. They see the outward phenomena that come and go on the surface, but they do not see those profound forces which, although they are so far operating imperceptibly, will nevertheless determine the course of developments.

Outwardly, everything would seem to be "going well": the U.S.A. has put Western Europe, Japan and other capitalist countries on rations: Germany (Western), Britain, France, Italy and Japan have fallen into the clutches of the U.S.A. and are meekly obeying its commands. But it would be mistaken to think that things can continue to "go well" for "all eternity," that these countries will tolerate domination and oppression by the United States endlessly, that they will not endeavour to tear loose from American bondage and take the path of independent development.

Take, first of all, Britain and France. Undoubtedly, they are imperialist countries. Undoubtedly, cheap raw materials and secure markets are of paramount importance to them. Can it be assumed that they will endlessly tolerate the present situation, in which, under the guise of "Marshall plan aid," the Americans are penetrating into the economies of Britain and France and trying to convert them into adjuncts of the United States economy, and American capital is seizing raw materials and markets in the British and French colonies and thereby plotting disaster for the high profits of the British and French capitalists ? Would it not be truer to say that capitalist Britain, and, after her, capitalist France, will be compelled in the end to break from the embrace of the U.S.A. and enter into conflict with it in order to secure an independent position and, of course, high profits ?

Let us pass to the major vanquished countries, Germany (Western) and Japan. These countries are now languishing in misery under the jackboot of American imperialism. Their industry and agriculture, their trade, their foreign and home policies, and their whole life are fettered by the American occupation "regime." Yet only yesterday these countries were great imperialist powers and were shaking the foundations of the domination of Britain, the U.S.A. and France in Europe and Asia. To think that these countries will not try to get on their feet again, will not try to smash the U.S. "regime," and force their way to independent development, is to believe in miracles.

It is said that the contradictions between capitalism and and socialism are stronger than the contradictions among the capitalist countries. Theoretically, of course, that is true. It is not only true now, today ; it was true before the Second World War. And it was more or less realized by the leaders of the capitalist countries. Yet the Second World War began not as a war with the U.S.S.R., but as a war between capitalist countries. Why ? Firstly, because war with the U.S.S.R., as a socialist land, is more dangerous to capitalism than war between capitalist countries ; for whereas war between capitalist countries puts in question only the supremacy of certain capitalist countries over others, war with the U.S.S.R. must certainly put in question the existence of capitalism itself. Secondly, because the capitalists, although they clamour, for "propaganda" purposes, about the aggressiveness of the Soviet Union, do not themselves believe that it is aggressive, because they are aware of the Soviet Union's peaceful policy and know that it will not itself attack capitalist countries.

After the First World War it was similarly believed that Germany had been definitely put out of action, just as certain comrades now believe that Japan and Germany have been definitely put out of action. Then, too, it was said and clamoured in the press that the United States had put Europe on rations; that Germany would never rise to her feet again, and that there would be no more wars between capitalist countries. In spite of this, Germany rose to her feet again as a great power within the space of some fifteen or twenty years after her defeat, having broken out of bondage and taken the path of independent development. And it is significant that it was none other than Britain and the United States that helped Germany to recover economically and to enhance her economic war potential. Of course, when the United States and Britain assisted Germany's economic recovery, they did so with a view to setting a recovered Germany against the Soviet Union, to utilizing her against the land of socialism. But Germany directed her forces in the first place against the Anglo-French-American bloc. And when Hitler Germany declared war on the Soviet Union, the Anglo-French-American block, far from joining with Hitler Germany, was compelled to enter into a coalition with the U.S.S.R. against Hitler Germany.

Consequently, the struggle of the capitalist countries for markets and their desire to crush their competitors proved in practice to be stronger than the contradictions between the capitalist camp and the socialist camp.

What guarantee is there, then, Germany and Japan will not rise to their feet again, will not attempt to break out of American bondage and live their own independent lives? I think there is no such guarantee.

But it follows from this that the inevitability of wars between capitalist countries remains in force.

It is said that Lenin's thesis that imperialism inevitably generates war must now be regarded as obsolete, since powerful popular forces have come forward today in defence of peace and against another world war. That is not true.

The object of the present-day peace movement is to rouse the masses of the people to fight for the preservation of peace and for the prevention of another world war. Consequently, the aim of this movement is not to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism—it confines itself to the democratic aim of preserving peace. In this respect, the present-day peace movement differs from the movement of the time of the First World War for the conversion of the imperialist war into civil war, since the latter movement went farther and pursued socialist aims.

It is possible that in a definite conjunction of circumstances the fight for peace will develop here or there into a fight for socialism. But then it will no longer be the present-day peace movement; it will be a movement for the overthrow of capitalism.

What is most likely is that the present-day peace movement, as a movement for the preservation of peace, will, if it succeeds, result in preventing a *particular* war, in its temporary postponement, in the temporary preservation of a particular peace, in the resignation of a bellicose government and its supersession by another that is prepared temporarily to keep the peace. That, of course, will be good. Even very good. But, all the same, it will not be enough to eliminate the inevitability of wars between capitalist countries generally. It will not be enough, because, for all the successes of the peace movement, imperialism will remain, continue in force—and, consequently, the inevitability of wars will also continue in force.

To eliminate the inevitability of war, it is necessary to abolish imperialism.

7. THE BASIC ECONOMIC LAWS OF MODERN CAPITALISM AND OF SOCIALISM

As you know, the queston of the basic economic laws of capitalism and of socialism arose several times in the course of the discussion. Various views were expressed on this score, even the most fantastic. True, the majority of the participants in the discussion reacted feebly to the matter, and no decision on the point was indicated. However, none of the participants denied that such laws exist.

Is there a basic economic law of capitalism? Yes, there is. What is this law, and what are its characteristic features? The basic economic law of capitalism is such a law as determines not some particular aspect or particular processes of the development of capitalist production, but all the principal aspects and all the principal processes of its development—one, consequently, which determines the essence of capitalist production, its essential nature.

Is the law of value the basic economic law of capitalism? No. The law of value is primarily a law of commodity production. It existed before capitalism, and, like commodity production, will continue to exist after the overthrow of capitalism, as it does, for instance, in our country, although, it is true, with a restricted sphere of operation. Having a wide sphere of operation in capitalist conditions, the law of value, of course, plays a big part in the development of capitalist production. But not only does it not determine the essence of capitalist production and the principles of capitalist profit; it does not even pose these problems. Therefore, it cannot be the basic economic law of modern capitalism.

For the same reasons, the law of competition and anarchy of production, or the law of uneven development of capitalism in the various countries cannot be the basic economic law of capitalism either.

It is said that the law of the average rate of profit is the basic economic law of modern capitalism. That is not true. Modern capitalism, monopoly capitalism, cannot content itself with the average profit, which moreover has a tendency to decline, in view of the increasing organic composition of capital. It is not the average profit, but the maximum profit that modern monopoly capitalism demands, which it needs for more or less regular extended reproduction.

Most appropriate to the concept of a basic economic law of capitalism is the law of surplus value, the law of the origin and growth of capitalist profit. It really does determine the basic features of capitalist production. But the law of surplus value is too general a law; it does not cover the problem of the highest rate of profit, the securing of which is a condition for the development of monopoly capitalism. In order to remedy this deficiency, the law of surplus value must be made more concrete and developed further in adaptation to the conditions of monopoly capitalism, at the same time bearing in mind that monopoly capitalism demands not any sort of profit, but precisely the maximum profit. That will be the basic economic law of modern capitalism.

The main features and requirements of the basic economic law of modern capitalism might be formulated roughly in this way: the securing of the maximum capitalist profit through the exploitation, ruin and impoverishment of the majority of the population of the given country, through the enslavement and systematic robbery of the peoples of other countries, especially backward countries, and, lastly, through wars and militarization of the national economy, which are utilized for the obtaining of the highest profits.

It is said that the average profit might nevertheless be regarded as quite sufficient for capitalist development under modern conditions. That is not true. The average profit is the lowest point of profitableness, below which capitalist production becomes impossible. But it would be absurd to think that, in seizing colonies, subjugating peoples and engineering wars, the magnates of modern monopoly capitalism are striving to secure only the average profit. No, it is not the average profit, nor yet superprofit—which, as a rule, represents only a slight addition to the average profit—but precisely the maximum profit that is the motor of monopoly capitalism. It is precisely the necessity of securing the maximum profit that drives monopoly capitalism to such risky undertakings as the enslavement and systematic plunder of colonies and other backward countries, the conversion of a number of independent countries into dependent countries, the organization of new wars—which to the magnates of modern capitalism is the "business" best adapted to the extraction of the maximum profit—and, lastly, attempts to win world economic supremacy.

The importance of the basic economic law of capitalism consists, among other things, in the circumstances that, since it determines all the major phenomena in the development of the capitalist mode of production, its booms and crises, its victories and defeats, its merits and demerits—the whole process of its contradictory development—it enables us to understand and explain them.

Here is one of many "striking" examples.

We are all acquainted with facts from the history and practice of capitalism illustrative of the rapid development of technology under capitalism, when the capitalists appear as the standard-bearers of the most advanced techniques, as revolutionaries in the development of the technique of production. But we are also familiar with facts of a different kind, illustrative of a halt in technical development under capitalism, when the capitalists appear as reactionaries in the development of new techniques and not infrequently resort to hand labour.

How is this crying contradiction to be explained? It can only be explained by the basic economic law of modern capitalism, that is, by the necessity of obtaining the maximum profit. Capitalism is in favour of new techniques when they promise it the highest profit. Capitalism is against new techniques, and for resort to hand labour, when the new techniques no longer promise the highest profit.

That is how matters stand with the basic economic law of modern capitalism.

Is there a basic economic law of socialism? Yes, there is. What are the essential features and requirements of this law? The essential features and requirements of the basic economic law of socialism might be formulated roughly in this way: the securing of the maximum satisfaction of the constantly rising material and cultural requirements of the whole of society through the continuous expansion and perfection of socialist production on the basis of higher techniques.

Consequently: instead of maximum profits—maximum satisfaction of the material and cultural requirements of society; instead of development of production with breaks in continuity from boom to crisis and from crisis to boom—unbroken expansion of production; instead of periodic breaks in technical development, accompanied by destruction of the productive forces of society—an unbroken process of perfecting production on the basis of higher techniques.

It is said that the law of the balanced, proportionate development of the national economy is the basic economic law of socialism. That is not true. Balanced development of the national economy, and, hence, economic planning, which is a more or less faithful reflection of this law, can yield nothing by themselves, if it is not known for what purpose economic development is planned, or if that purpose is not clear. The law of balanced development of the national economy can yield the desired result only if there is a purpose for the sake of which economic development is planned. This purpose the law of balanced development of the national economy cannot itself provide. Still less can economic planning provide it. This purpose is inherent in the basic economic law of socialism, in the shape of its requirements, as expounded above. Consequently, the law of balanced development of the national economy can operate to its full scope only if its operation rests on the basic economic law of socialism.

As to economic planning, it can achieve positive results only if two conditions are observed: a) if it correctly reflects the requirements of the law of balanced development of the national economy, and b) if it conforms in every way to the requirements of the basic economic law of socialism.

8. OTHER QUESTIONS

1) Extra-economic coercion under feudalism.

Of course, extra-economic coercion did play a part in strengthening the economic power of the feudal landlords ; however, not it, but feudal ownership of the land was the basis of feudalism.

2) Personal property of the collective-farm household.

It would be wrong to say, as the draft textbook does, that "every household in a collective farm has in personal use a cow, small livestock and poultry." Actually, as we know, it is not in personal use, but as personal *property* that the collective-farm household has its cow, small livestock, popultry, etc. The expression "in personal use" has evidently been taken from the Model Rules of the Agricultural Artel. But a mistake was made in the Model Rules of the Agricultural Artel. The Constitution of the U.S.S.R., which was drafted more carefully, puts it differently, viz.:

"Every household in a collective farm . . . has as its personal property a subsidiary husbandry on the plot, a dwelling house, livestock, poultry and minor agricultural implements."

That, of course, is correct.

It would be well, in addition, to state more particularly that every collective farmer has as his personal property from one to so-many cows, depending on local conditions, so-many sheep, goats, pigs (also from-to, depending on local conditions), and an unlimited quantity of poultry (ducks, geese, hens, turkeys).

Such detailed particulars are of great importance for our comrades abroad, who want to know what exactly has remained as the personal property of the collective-farm household now that agriculture in our country has been collectivized.

3) Total rent paid by the peasants to the landlords ; also total expenditure on the purchase of land.

The draft textbook says that as a result of the nationalization of the land, "the peasantry were released from paying rent to the landlords to a total of about 500 million rubles annually" (it should be "gold" rubles). This figure should be verified, because it seems to me that it does not include the rent paid over the whole of Russia, but only in a majority of the Russian gubernias. It should also be borne in mind that in some of the border regions of Russia rent was paid in kind, a fact which the authors of the draft texbook have evidently overlooked. Furthermore, it should be remembered that the peasants were released not only from the payment of rent, but also from annual expenditure for the purchase of land. Was this taken into account in the draft textook ? It seems to me that it was not ; but it should have been.

4) Coalescence of the monopolies with the state machine.

The word "coalescene" is not appropriate. It superficially and descriptively notes the process of merging of the monopolies with the state, but it does not reveal the economic import of this process. The fact of the matter is that the merging process is not simply a process of coalescence, but the subjugation of the state machine to the monopolies. The word "cealescene" should therefore be discarded and replaced by the words "subjugation of the state machine to the monopolies."

5) Use of machines in the U.S.S.R.

The draft texbook says that "in the U.S.S.R. machines are used in all cases when they economize the labour of society." That is by no means what should be said. In the first place, machines in the U.S.S.R. always economize the labour of society, and we accordingly do not know of any cases when, in the U.S.S.R., they have not economized the labour of society. In the second place, machines not only economize labour ; they also lighten the labour of the worker, and accordingly, in our conditions, in contradistinction to the conditions of capitalism, the workers use machines in the processes of labour with the greatest eagerness.

It should therefore be said that nowhere are machines used so willingly as in the U.S.S.R., because they economize the labour of society and lighten the labour of the worker, and, as there is no unemployment in the U.S.S.R., the workers use machines in the national economy with the greatest eagerness.

6) Living standards of the working class in capitalist countries.

Usually, when speaking of the living standards of the working class, what is meant is only the standards of employed workers, and not of what is known as the reserve army of unemployed. Is such an attitude to the question of the living standards of the working class correct ? I think it is not. If there is a reserve army of unemployed, whose members cannot live except by the sale or their labour power, then the unemployed must necessarily form part of the working class ; and if they do form part of the working class, then their destitute condition cannot but influence the living standards of the employed workers. I therefore think that when describing the living standards of the working class in capitalist countries, the condition of the reserve army of unemployed workers should also be taken into account.

7) National income.

I think it *absolutely* necessary to add a chapter on national income to the draft texbook.

8) Should there be a special chapter in the texbook on Lenin and Stalin as the founders of the political economy of socialism ?

I think that the chapter, "The Marxist Theory of Socialism. Founding of the Political Economy of Socialism by V. I. Lenin and J. V. Stalin," should be excluded from the textbook. It is entirely unnecessary, since it adds nothing, and only colourlessly reiterates what has already been said in greater detail in earlier chapters of the textbook.

As regards the other questions, I have no remarks to make on the "Proposals" of Comrades Ostrovityanov, Leontyev, Shepilov, Gatovsky, etc.

9. INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF A MARXIST TEXTBOOK ON POLITICAL ECONOMY

I think that the comrades do not appreciate the importance of a Marxist textbook on political economy as fully as they should. It is needed not only by our Soviet youth. It is particularly needed by Communists and communist sympathizers in all countries. Our comrades abroad want to know how we broke out of capitalist slavery ; how we rebuilt the economy of our country on socialist lines ; how we secured the friendship of the peasantry ; how we managed to convert a country which was only so recently poverty-stricken and weak into a rich and mighty country ; what are the collective farms ; why, although the means of production are socialized, we do not abolish commodity production, money, trade, etc. They want to know all this, and much else, not out of idle curiosity, but in order to learn from us and to utilize our experience in their own countries. Consequently, the appearance of a good Marxist textbook on political economy is not only of political importance at home, but also of great international importance.

What is needed, therefore, is a textbook which might serve as a reference book for the revolutionary youth not only at home, but also abroad. It must not be too bulky, because an overbulky textbook cannot be a reference book and is difficult to assimilate, to master. But it must contain everything fundamental relating both to the economy of our country and to the economy of capitalism and the colonial system.

During the discussion, some comrades proposed the inclusion in the textbook of a number of additional chapters : the historians—on history, the political scientists—on politics, the philosophers—on philosophy, the economists—on economics. But the effect of this would be to swell the textbook to unwieldy dimensions. That, of course, must not be done. The textbook employs the historical method to illustrate problems of political economy, but that does not mean that we must turn a textbook on political economy into a history of economic relations.

What we need is a textbook of 500, at most 600 pages—not more. That will be a reference book on Marxian political economy—and an excellent gift to the young Communists of all countries.

Incidentally, in view of the inadequate level of Marxist development of the majority of the Communist parties abroad, such a textbook might also be of great use to the older communist cadres abroad.

10. WAYS OF IMPROVING THE DRAFT TEXTBOOK ON POLITICAL ECONOMY

During the discussion some comrades "ran down" the draft textbook much too assiduously, berated its authors for errors and oversights, and claimed that the draft was a failure. That is unfair. Of course, there are errors and oversights in the textbook—they are to be found in practically every big undertaking. Be that as it may, the overwhelming majority of the participants in the discussion were nevertheless of the opinion that the draft might serve as a basis for the future textbook and only needed certain corrections and additions. Indeed, one has only to compare the draft with the textbooks on political economy now in circulation to see that the draft stands head and shoulders above them. For that the authors of the draft deserve great credit.

I think that in order to improve the draft textbook, it would be well to appoint a small committee which would include not only the authors of the textbook, and not only supporters, but also opponents of the majority of the participants in the discussion, out-and-out critics of the draft textbook.

It would also be well to include in the committee a competent statistician to verify the figures and to supply additional statistical material for the draft, as well as a competent jurist to verify the accuracy of the formulations.

The members of the committee should be temporarily relieved of all other work and should be well provided for, so that they might devote themselves entirely to the textbook.

Furthermore, it would be well to appoint an editorial committee, of three persons, say, to take care of the final editing of the textbook. This is necessary also in order to achieve unity of style, which, unfortunately, the draft textbook lacks.

Time limit for presentation of the finished texbook to the Central Committee—one year.

J. STALIN

February 1, 1952

Reply to Comrade Alexander Ilyich Notkin

Comrade Notkin,

I was in no hurry to reply, because I saw no urgency in the questions you raised. All the more that there are other questions which are urgent, and which naturally deflected attention from your letter.

I shall answer point by point.

The first point.

There is a statement in the "Remarks" to the effect that society is not powerless against the laws of science, that man, having come to know economic laws, can utilize them in the interests of society. You assert that this postulate cannot be extended to other social formations, that it holds good only under socialism and communism, that the elemental character of the economic processes under capitalism, for example, makes it impossible for society to utilize economic laws in the interests of society.

That is not true. At the time of the bourgeois revolution in France, for instance, the bourgeoisie utilized against feudalism the law that relations of production must necessarily conform with the character of the productive forces, overthrew the feudal relations of production, created new, bourgeois relations of production, and brought them into conformity with the character of the productive forces which had arisen in the bosom of the feudal system. The bourgeoisie did this not because of any particular abilities it possessed, but because it was vitally interested in doing so. The feudalists put up resistance to this not from stupidity, but because they were vitally interested in preventing this law from becoming effective.

The same must be said of the socialist revolution in our country. The working class utilized the law that the relations of production must necessarily conform with the character of the productive forces, overthrew the bourgeois relations of production, created new, socialist relations of production and brought them into conformity with the character of the productive forces. It was able to do so not because of any particular abilities it possessed, but because it was vitally interested in doing so. The bourgeoisie, which from an advanced force at the dawn of the bourgeois revolution had already become a counterrevolutionary force, offered every resistance to the implementation of this law—and it did so not because it lacked organization, and not because the elemental nature of economic processes drove it to resist, but chiefly because it was to its vital interest that the law should not become operative.

Consequently :

1. Economic processes, economic laws are in one degree or another utilized in the interests of society not only under socialism and communism, but under other formations as well ;

2. The utilization of economic laws in class society always and everywhere has a class background to it, and, moreover always and everywhere the champion of the utilization of economic laws in the interests of society is the advanced class, while the obsolescent classes resist it.

The difference in this matter between the proletariat and the other classes which at any time in the course of history revolutionized the relations of production consists in the fact that the class interests of the proletariat merge with the interests of the overwhelming majority of society, because proletarian revolution implies the abolition not of one or other form of exploitation, but of all exploitation, while the revolutions of other classes, which abolished only one or other form of exploitation, were confined within the limits of their narrow class interests, which conflicted with the interests of the majority of society.

The "Remarks" speak of the class background of the utilization of economic laws in the interests of society. It is stated there that "unlike the laws of natural science, where the discovery and discovery and application of a new law in the economic field, application of a new law proceeds more or less smoothly, the affecting as it does the interests of obsolescent forces of society, meets with the most powerful resistance on their part." This point you missed.

The second point.

You assert that complete conformity of the relations of production with the character of the productive forces can be achieved only under socialism and communism, and that under other formations the conformity can only be partial.

That is not true. In the epoch following the bourgeois revolution, when the bourgeoisie had shattered the feudal relations of production and established bourgeois relations of production, there undoubtedly were periods when the bourgeois production relations did fully conform with the character of the productive forces. Otherwise, capitalism could not have developed as swiftly as it did after the bourgeois revolution.

Further, the words "full conformity" must not be understood in the absolute sense. They must not be understood as meaning that there is altogether no lagging of the relations of production behind the growth of the productive forces under socialism. The productive forces are the most mobile and revolutionary forces of production. They undeniably move in advance of the relations of production even under socialism. Only after a certain lapse of time do the relations of production change in line with the character of the productive forces.

How, then, are the words "full conformity" to be understood? They are to be understood as meaning that under socialism things do not usually go to the length of a conflict between the relations of production and the productive forces, that society is in a position to take timely steps to bring the lagging relations of production into conformity with the character of the productive forces. Socialist society is in a position to do so because it does not include obsolescent classes that might organize resistance. Of course, even under socialism there will be backward, inert forces that do not realize the necessity for changing the relations of production; but they, of course, will not be difficult to overcome without bringing matters to a conflict.

The third point.

It appears from your argument that you regard the means of production, and, in the first place, the implements of production produced by our nationalized enterprises, as commodities.

Can means of production be regarded as commodities in our social system ? In my opinion they certainly cannot.

A commodity is a product which may be sold to any purchaser, and when its owner sells it, he loses ownership of it and the purchaser becomes the owner of the commodity, which he may resell, pledge or allow to rot. Do means of production come within this category ? They obviously do not. In the first place, means of production are not "sold" to any purchaser, they are not "sold" even to collective farms ; they are only allocated by the state to its enterprises. In the second place, when transferring means of production to any enterprise, their owner—the state—does not at all lose the ownership of them ; on the contrary, it retains it fully. In the third place, directors of enterprises who receive means of production from the Soviet state, far from becoming their owners, are deemed to be the agents of the state in the utilization of the means of production in accordance with the plans established by the state.

It will be seen, then, that under our system means of production can certainly not be classed in the category of commodities.

Why, in that case, do we speak of the value of means of production, their cost of production, their price, etc. ?

For two reasons.

Firstly, this is needed for purposes of calculation and settlement, for determining whether enterprises are paying or running at a loss, for checking and controlling the enterprises. But that is only the formal aspect of the matter.

Secondly, it is needed in order, in the interests of our foreign trade, to conduct sales of means of production to foreign countries. Here, in the sphere of foreign trade, but only in this sphere, our means of prodution really are commodities, and really are sold (in the direct meaning of the term).

It therefore follows that in the sphere of foreign trade the means of production produced by our enterprises retain the properties of commodities both essentially and formally, but that in the sphere of domestic economic circulation, means of production lose the properties of commodities, cease to be commodities and pass out of the sphere of operation of the law of value, retaining only the outward integument of commodities (calculation, etc.).

How is this peculiarity to be explained ?

The fact of the matter is that in our socialist conditions economic development proceeds not by way of upheavals, but by way of gradual changes, the old not simply being abolished out of hand, but changing its nature in adaptation to the new, and retaining only its form ; while the new does not simply destroy the old, but infiltrates into it, changes its nature and its functions, without smashing its form, but utilizing it for the development of the new. This, in our economic circulation, is true not only of commodities, but also of money, as well as of banks, which, while they lose their old functions and acquire new ones, preserve their old form, which is utilized by the socialist system.

If the matter is approached from the formal angle, from the angle of the processes taking place on the surface of phenomena, one may arrive at the incorrect conclusion that the categories of capitalism retain their validity under our economy. If, however, the matter is approached from the standpoint of Marxist analysis, which strictly distinguishes between the substance of an economic process and its form, between the deep processes of development and the surface phenomena, one comes to the only correct conclusion, namely, that it is chiefly the form, the outward appearance, of the old categories of capitalism that have remained in our country, but that their essence has radically changed in adaptation to the requirements of the development of the socialist economy.

The fourth point.

You assert that the law of value exercises a regulating influence on the prices of the "means of production" produced by agriculture and delivered to the state at the procurement prices. You refer to such "means of production" as raw materials—cotton, for instance. You might have added flax, wool and other agricultural raw materials.

It should first of all be observed that in this case it is not "means of production" that agriculture produces, but only one of the means of production—raw materials. The words "means of production" should not be juggled with. When Marxists speaks of the production of means of production, what they primarily have in mind is the production of implements of production, what Marx calls "the instruments of labour, those of a mechanical nature, which, taken as a wohle, we may call the bone and muscles of production," which constitute the "characteristics of a given epoch of production." To equate a part of the means of production (raw materials) with the means of production, including the implements of production, is to sin against Marxism, because Marxism considers that the implements of production play a decisive role compared with all other means of production. Everyone knows that, by themselves, raw materials cannot produce implements of production, although certain kinds of raw materials are necessary for the production of implements of production, while no raw material can be produced without implements of production.

Further : is the influence of the law of value on the price of raw materials produced by agriculture a *regulating* influence, as you, Comrade Notkin, claim ? It would be a regulating one, if prices of agricultural raw materials had "free" play in our country, if the law of competition and anarchy of production prevailed, if we did not have a planned economy, and if the production of raw materials were not regulated by plan. But since all these "ifs" are missing in our economic system, the influence of the law of value on the price of agricultural raw materials cannot be a regulating one. In the first place, in our country prices of agricultural raw materials are fixed, established by plan, and are not "free." In the second place, the quantities of agricultural raw materials produced are not determined spontaneously or by chance elements, but by plan. In the third place, the implements of production needed for the producing of agricultural raw materials are concentrated not in the hands of individuals, or groups of individuals, but in the hands of the state. What then, after this, remains of the regulating function of the law of value ? It appears that the law of value is itself regulated by the above-mentioned factors characteristic of socialist production.

Consequently, it cannot be denied that the law of value does influence the formation of prices of agricultural raw materials, that it is one of the factors in this process. But still less can it be denied that its influence is not, and cannot be, a regulating one.

The fifth point.

When speaking, in my "Remarks," of the profitableness of the socialist national economy, I was controverting certain comrades who allege that, by not giving great preference to profitable enterprises, and by tolerating the existence side by side with them of unprofitable enterprises, our planned economy is killing the very principle of profitableness of economic undertakings. The "Remarks" say that profitableness considered from the standpoint of individual plants or industries is beneath all comparison with that higher form of profitableness which we get from our socialist mode of production, which saves us from crises of overproduction and ensures us a continuous expansion of production.

But it would be mistaken to conclude from this that the profitableness of individual plants and industries is of no particular value and is not deserving of serious attention. That, of course, is not true. The profitableness of individual plants and industries is of immense value for the development of our industry. It must be taken into account both when planning construction and when planning production. It is an elementary requirement of our economic activity at the present stage of development.

The sixth point.

It is not clear how your words "extended production in strongly deformed guise" in reference to capitalism are to be understood. It should be said that such production, and extended, production at that, does not occur in nature.

It is evident that, even after the world market has split, and the sphere of exploitation of the world's resources by the major capitalist countries (U.S.A., Britain, France) has begun to contract, the cyclical character of the development of capitalism—expansion and contraction of production—must continue to operate. However, expansion of production in these countries will proceed on a narrower basis, since the volume of production in these countries will diminish.

The seventh point.

The general crisis of the world capitalist system began in the period of the First World War, particularly due to the falling away of the Soviet Union from the capitalist system. That was the first stage in the general crisis. A second stage in the general crisis developed in the period of the Second World War, especially after the European and Asian people's democracies fell away from the capitalist system. The first crisis, in the period of the First World War, and the second crisis, in the period of the Second World War, must not be regarded as separate, unconnected and independent crises, but as stages in the development of the general crisis of the world capitalist system.

Is the general crisis of world capitalism only a political, or only an economic cirsis? Neither the one, nor the other. It is a general, i.e., an all-round crisis of the world capitalist system, embracing both the economic and the political spheres. And it is clear that at the bottom of it lies the ever-increasing decay of the world capitalist economic system, on the one hand, and the growing economic might of the countries which have fallen away from capitalism—the U.S.S.R., China and the other people's democracies—on the other.

J. STALIN

April 21, 1952

Concerning the Errors of Comrade L. D. Yaroshenko

Some time ago Comrade Yaroshenko circulated a letter to the members of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C.P.S.U. (B), dated March 20, 1952, on a number of economic questions which were debated at the November discussion. The author of the letter complains that the basic documents summing up the discussion, and Comrade Stalin's "Remarks," "contain no reflection whatever of the opinion" of Comrade Yaroshenko. Comrade Yaroshenko also suggests in his note that he should be allowed to write a "Political Economy of Socialism," to be completed in a year or a year and a half, and that he should be given two assistants to help him in the work.

I think that both Comrade Yaroshenko's complaint and his proposal need to be examined on their merits.

Let us begin with the complaint.

Well, then, what is the "opinion" of Comrade Yaroshenko which has received no reflection whatever in the above-mentioned documents?

I

COMRADE YAROSHENKO'S CHIEF ERROR

To describe Comrade Yaroshenko's opinion in a couple of words, it should be said that it is un-Marxist—and, hence, profoundly erroneous.

Comrade Yaroshenko's chief error is that he forsakes the Marxist position on the question of the role of the productive forces and of the relations of production in the development of society, that he inordinately overrates the role of the productive forces, and just as inordinately underrates the role of the relations of production, and ends up by declaring that under socialism the relations of production are a component part of the productive forces.

Comrade Yaroshenko is prepared to grant the relations of production a certain role under the conditions of "antagonistic class contradictions," inasmuch as there the relations of production "run counter to the development of the productive forces." But he confines it to a purely negative role, the role of a factor which retards the development of the productive forces, which fetters their development. Any other functions, positive functions, of the relations of production, Comrade Yaroshenko fails to see.

As to the socialist system, where "antagonistic class contradictions" no longer exist, and where the relations of production "no longer run counter to the development of the productive forces," here, according to Comrade Yaroshenko, the relations of production lose every vestige of an independent role, they cease to be a serious factor of development, and are absorbed by the productive forces, becoming a component part of them. Under socialism, Comrade Yaroshenko says, "men's production relations become part of the organization of the productive forces, as a means, an element of their organization." (See Comrade Yaroshenko's letter to the Political Bureau of the C.C.)

If that is so, what is the chief task of a Political Economy of Socialism? Comrade Yaroshenko replies : "The chief problem of the Political Economy of Socialism, therefore, *is not* to investigate the relations of production of the members of socialist society ; *it is* to elaborate and develop a scientific theory of the organization of the productive forces in social production, a theory of the planning of economic development." (See Comrade Yaroshenko's speech at the Plenary Discussion.)

That, in fact, explains why Comrade Yaroshenko is not interested in such economic questions of the socialist system as the existence of different forms of property in our economy, commodity circulation, the law of value, etc., which he believes to be minor questions that only give rise to scholastic disputes. He plainly declares that in the Political Economy of Socialism "disputes as to the role of any particular category of socialist political economy—value, commodity, money, credit, etc.,—which very often with us are of a scholastic character, *are replaced* by a healthy discussion of the rational organization of the productive forces in social production, of a scientific substantiation of the validity of such organization." (See Comrade Yaroshenko's speech in the Discussion Working Panel.)

In short, political economy without economic problems.

Comrade Yaroshenko thinks that it is enough to arrange a "rational organization of the productive forces," and the transition from socialism to communism will take place without any particular difficulty. He considers that this is quite sufficient for the transition to communism. He plainly declares that "under socialism, the basic struggle for the building of a communist society reduces itself to a struggle for the proper organization of the productive forces and their ratioanl utilization in social production." (See Speech at the Plenary Discussion.) Comrade Yaroshenko solemnly proclaims that "Communism is the highest scientific organization of the productive forces in social production."

It appears, then, that the essence of the communist system begins and ends with the "rational organization of the productive forces."

From all this, Comrade Yaroshenko concludes that there cannot be a single Political Economy for all social formations, that there must be two political economies: one for pre-socialist social formations, the subject of investigation of which is men's relations of production, and the other for the socialist system, the subject of investigation of which should be not the production, i.e., the economic relations, but the rational organization of the productive forces.

Such is the opinion of Comrade Yaroshenko.

What can be said of this opinion?

It is not true, in the first place, that the role of the relations of production in the history of society has been confined to that of a brake, a fetter on the development of the productive forces. When Marxists speak of the retarding role of the relations of production, it is not all relations of production they have in mind, but only the old relations of production, which no longer conform to the growth of the productive forces and, consequently, retard their development. But as we know, besides the old, there are also new relations of production, which supersede the old. Can it be said that the role of the new relations of production is that of a brake on the productive forces? No, it cannot. On the contrary, the new relations of production are the *chief* and decisive force, the one which in fact determines the further, and, moreover, powerful, development of the productive forces, and without which the latter would be doomed to stagnation, as is the case today in the capitalist countries.

Nobody can deny that the development of the productive forces of our Soviet industry has made tremendous strides in the period of the five-year plans. But this development would not have occurred if we had not, in October 1917, replaced the old, capitalist relations of production by new, socialist relations of production. Without this revolution in the production, the economic, relations of our country, our productive forces would have stagnated, just as they are stagnating today in the capitalist countries.

Nobody can deny that the development of the productive forces of our agriculture has made tremendous strides in the past twenty or twenty-five years. But this development would not have occurred if we had not in the 'thirties replaced the old, capitalist production relations in the countryside by new, collectivist production relations. Without this revolution in production, the productive forces of our agriculture would have stagnated, just as they are stagnating today in the capitalist countries.

Of course, new relations of production cannot, and do not, remain new forever ; they begin to grow old and to run counter to the further development of the productive forces ; they begin to lose their role of principal mainspring of the productive forces, and become a brake on them. At this point, in place of these production relations which have become antiquated, new production relations appear whose role it is to be the principal mainspring spurring the further development of the productive forces.

This peculiar development of the relations of production from the role of a brake on the productive forces to that of the principal mainspring impelling them forward, and from the role of principal mainspring to that of a brake on the productive forces, constitutes one of the chief elements of the Marxian materialist dialectics. Every novice in Marxism knows that nowadays. But Comrade Yaroshenko, it appears, does not know it.

It is not true, in the second place, that the production, i.e., the economic, relations lose their independent role under socialism, that they are absorbed by the productive forces, that social production under socialism is reduced to the organization of the productive forces. Marxism regards social production as an integral whole which has two inseparable sides: the productive forces of society (the relations of society to the forces of nature, in contest with which it secures the material values it needs), and the relations of production (the relations of men to one another in the process of production). These are two different sides of social production, although they are inseparably connected with one another. And just because they constitute different sides of social production, they are able to influence one another. To assert that one of these sides may be absorbed by the other and be converted into its component part, is to commit a very grave sin against Marxism.

Marx said:

"In production, men not only act on nature but also on one another. They produce only by cooperating in a certain way and mutually exchanging their activities. In order to produce, they enter into definite connections and relations with one another and only within these social connections and relations does their action on nature, does production, take place." (See K. Marx and F. Engels, Vol. V, p. 429.)

Consequently, social production consists of two sides, which, although they are inseparably connected, reflect two different categories of relations: the relations of men to nature (productive forces), and the relations of men to one another in the process of production (production relations). Only when both sides of production are present do we have social production, whether it be under the socialist system or under any other social formation.

Comrade Yaroshenko, evidently, is not quite in agreement with Marx. He considers that this precept of Marx is not applicable to the socialist system. Precisely for this reason he reduces the problem of the Political Economy of Socialism to the rational organization of the productive forces, discarding the production, the economic, relations and severing the productive forces from them.

Consequently, what Comrade Yaroshenko arrives at is not a Marxian Political Economy, but something in the nature of Bogdanov's "Universal Organizing Science."

Hence, starting from the right idea that the productive forces are the most mobile and revolutionary forces of production, Comrade Yaroshenko reduces the idea to an absurdity, to the point of denying the role of the production, the economic, relations under socialism ; and instead of a full-blooded social production, what he gets is a lopsided and scraggy technology of production —something in the nature of Bukharin's "technique of social organization."

Marx says :

"In the social production of their life (that is, in the production of the material values necessary to the life of men —*J. St.*), men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness." (See *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* Preface.)

This means that every social formation, socialist society included, has its economic foundation, consisting of the sum total of men's relations of production. What, one asks, happens to the economic foundation of the socialist system with Comrade Yaroshenko ? As we know, Comrade Yaroshenko has already done away with relations of production under socialism as a more or less independent sphere, and has included the little that remains of them in the organization of the productive forces. Has the socialist system, one asks, its own economic foundation ? Obviously, seeing that the relations of production have disappeared as a more or less independent factor under socialism, the socialist system is left without an economic foundation.

In short, a socialist system without an economic foundation. A rather funny situation . . . .

Is a social system without an economic foundation possible at all ? Comrade Yaroshenko evidently believes that it is. Marxism, however, believes that such social systems do not occur in nature.

It is not true, lastly, that communism is the rational organization of the productive forces, that the rational organization of the productive forces is the beginning and end of the communist system, that it is only necessary to organize the productive forces rationally, and the transition to communism will take place without particular difficulty. There is in our literature another definition, another formula of communism—Lenin's formula : "Communism is Soviet rule plus the electrification of the whole country." Lenin's formula is evidently not to Comrade Yaroshenko's liking, and he replaces it with his own home-made formula : "Communism is the highest scientific organization of the productive forces in social production."

In the first place, nobody knows what this "highest scientific" or "rational" organization of the productive forces which Comrade Yaroshenko advertises represents, what its concrete import is. In his speeches at the Plenum and in the working panels of the discussion, and in his letter to the members of the Political Bureau, Comrade Yaroshenko reiterates this mythical formula dozens of times, but nowhere does he say a single word to explain how the "rational organization" of the productive forces, which supposedly constitutes the beginning and end of the essence of the communist system, should be understood.

In the second place, if a choice must be made between the two formulas, then it is not Lenin's formula, which is the only correct one, that should be discarded, but Comrade Yaroshenko's pseudo formula, which is so obviously chimerical and un-Marxist, and is borrowed from the arsenal of Bogdanov, from his "Universal Organizing Science."

Comrade Yaroshenko thinks that we have only to ensure a rational organization of the productive forces, and we shall be able to obtain an abundance of products and to pass to communism, to pass from the formula, "to each according to his work," to the formula, "to each according to his needs." That is a profound error, and reveals a complete lack of understanding of the laws of economic development of socialism. Comrade Yaroshenko's conception of the conditions for the transition from socialism to communism is far too rudimentary and puerile. He does not understand that neither an abundance of products, capable of covering all the requirements of society, nor the transition to the formula, "to each according to his needs," can be brought about if such economic factors as collective-farm, group, property, commodity circulation, etc., remain in force. Comrade Yaroshenko does not understand that before we can pass to the formula, "to each according to his needs," we shall have to pass through a number of stages of economic and cultural re-education of society, in the course of which work will be transformed in the eyes of society from only a means of supporting life into life's prime want, and social property into the sacred and inviolable basis of the existence of society.

In order to pave the way for a real, and not declaratory transition to communism, at least three basic preliminary conditions have to be satisfied.

1. It is necessary, in the first place, definitely to ensure, not a mythical "rational organization" of the productive forces, but a continuous expansion of all social production, with a relatively higher rate of expansion of the production of means of production. The relatively higher rate of expansion of production of means of production is necessary not only because it has to provide the equipment both for its own plants and for all the other branches of the national economy, but also because reproduction on an extended scale becomes altogether impossible without it.

2. It is necessary, in the second place, by means of gradual transitions carried out to the advantage of the collective farms, and, hence, of all society, to raise collective-farm property to the level of public property, and, also by means of gradual transitions, to replace commodity circulation by a system of products-exchange, under which the central government, or some other social-economic centre, might control the whole product of social production in the interests of society.

Comrade Yaroshenko is mistaken when he asserts that there is no contradiction between the relations of production and the productive forces of society under socialism. Of course, our present relations of production are in a period when they fully conform to the growth of the productive forces and help to advance them at seven-league strides. But it would be wrong to rest easy at that and to think that there are no contradictions between our productive forces and the relations of production. There certainly are, and will be, contradictions, seeing that the development of the relations of production lag, and will lag, behind the development of the productive forces. Given a correct policy on the part of the directing bodies, these contradictions cannot grow into antagonisms, and there is no chance of matters coming to a conflict between the relations of production and the productive forces of society. It would be a different matter if we were to conduct a wrong policy, such as that Comrade Yaroshenko recommends. In that case conflict would be inevitable, and our relations of production might become a serious brake on the further development of the productive forces.

The task of the directing bodies is therefore promptly to discern incipient contradictions, and to take timely measures to resolve them by adapting the relations of production to the growth of the productive forces. This, above all, concerns such economic factors as group, or collective-farm, property and commodity circulation. At present, of course, these factors are being successfully utilized by us for the promotion of the socialist economy, and they are of undeniable benefit to our society. It is undeniable, too, that they will be of benefit also in the near future. But it would be unpardonable blindness not to see at the same time that these factors are already beginning to hamper the powerful development of our productive forces, since they create obstacles to the full extension of government planning to the whole of the national economy, especially agriculture. There is no doubt that these factors will hamper the continued growth of the productive forces of our country more and more as time goes on. The task therefore is to eliminate these contradictions by gradually converting collective-farm property into public property, and by introducing—also gradually—products-exchange in place of commodity circulation.

3. It is necessary, in the third place, to ensure such a cultural advancement of society as will secure for all members of society the all-round development of their physical and mental abilities, so that the members of society may be in a position to receive an education sufficient to enable them to be active agents of social development, and in a position freely to choose their occupations and not be tied all their lives, owing to the existing division of labour, to some one occupation.

What is required for this?

It would be wrong to think that such a substantial advance in the cultural standard of the members of society can be brought about without substantial changes in the present status of labour. For this, it is necessary, first of all, to shorten the working day at least to six, and subsequently to five hours. This is needed in order that the members of society might have the necessary free time to receive an all-round education. It is necessary, further, to introduce universal compulsory polytechnical education, which is required in order that the members of society might be able freely to choose their occupations and not be tied to some one occupation all their lives. It is likewise necessary that housing conditions should be radically improved, and that real wages and salaries should be at least doubled, if not more, both by means of direct increases of monetary wages, and, more especially, by further systematic reductions of prices for consumer goods.

These are the basic conditions required to pave the way for the transition to communism.

Only after *all* these preliminary conditions are satisfied in their entirety may it be hoped that work will be converted in the eyes of the members of society from a nuisance into "life's prime want" (Marx), that "labour will become a pleasure instead of a burden" (Engels), and that social property will be regarded by all members of society as the sacred and inviolable basis of the existence of society.

Only after *all* these preliminary conditions have been satisfied in their entirety will it be possible to pass from the socialist formula, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work," to the communist formula, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

This will be a radical transition from one form of economy, the economy of socialism, to another, higher form of economy, the economy of communism.

As we see, the transition from socialism to communism is not such a simple matter as Comrade Yaroshenko imagines.

To attempt to reduce this complex and multiform process, which demands deep-going economic changes, to the "rational organization of the productive forces," as Comrade Yaroshenko does, is to substitute Bogdanovism for Marxism.

II

OTHER ERRORS OF COMRADE YAROSHENKO

1. From his incorrect opinion, Comrade Yaroshenko draws incorrect conclusions relative to the character and province of political economy.

Comrade Yaroshenko denies the necessity for a single political economy for all social formations, on the grounds that every social formation has its specific economic laws. But he is absolutely wrong there, and is at variance with such Marxists as Engels and Lenin.

Engels says that political economy is "the science of the conditions and forms under which the *various human societies* have produced and exchanged and on this basis have distributed their products." (*Anti-Dühring.*) Hence, political economy investigates the laws of economic development not of any one social formation, but of the various social formations.

With this, as we know, Lenin was in full agreement. In his critical comments on Bukharin's *Economics of the Transition Period,* he said that Bukharin was wrong in restricting the province of political economy to commodity production, and above all to capitalist production, observing that in doing so Bukharin was taking "a step backward from Engels."

Fully in conformity with this is the definition of political economy given in the draft textbook, when it says that political economy is the science which studies "the laws of the social production and distribution of material values *at the various stages* of development of human society."

That is understandable. The various social formations are governed in their economic development not only by their own specific economic law, but also by the economic laws that are common to all formations, such as, for instance, the law that the productive forces and the relations of production are united in one integral social production, and the law governing the relations between the productive forces and the relations of production in the process of development of all social formations. Hence, social formations are not only divided from one another by their own specific laws, but also connected with one another by the economic laws common to all formations.

Engels was quite right when he said:

"In order to carry out this critique of bourgeois economy completely, an acquaintance with the capitalist form of production, exchange and distribution did not suffice. The forms which had preceded it or those which still exist alongside it in less developed countries had also, at least in their main features, to be examined and compared." (*Anti-Dühring.*)

It is obvious that here, on this question, Comrade Yaroshenko is in tune with Bukharin.

Further, Comrade Yaroshenko declares that in his "Political

Economy of Socialism." "the categories of political economy—value, commodity, money, credit, etc.,—*are replaced* by a healthy discussion of the rational organization of the productive forces in social production," that, consequently, the subject of investigation of *this* political economy will *not* be the production relations of socialism, *but* "the elaboration and development of a scientific theory of the organization of the productive forces, theory of economic planning, etc.," and that, under socialism, the relations of production lose their independent significance and are absorbed by the productive forces as a component part of them.

It must be said that never before has any retrograde "Marxist" delivered himself of such unholy twaddle. Just imagine a political economy of socialism without economic, production problems ! Does such a political economy exist anywhere in creation ? What is the effect, in a political economy of socialism, of replacing economic problems by problems of organization of the productive forces ? The effect is to abolish the political economy of socialism. And that is just what Comrade Yaroshenko does—he abolishes the political economy of socialism. Here he is entirely in unison with Bukharin. Bukharin *said* that with the elimination of capitalism, political economy would also be eliminated. Comrade Yaroshenko does not say this, but he *does* it ; he does abolish the political economy of socialism. True, he pretends that he is not in full agreement with Bukharin ; but that is only a trick, and a twopenny-ha'penny trick. In actual fact he is doing what Bukharin preached and what Lenin rose in arms against. Comrade Yaroshenko is following in the footsteps of Bukharin.

Further, Comrade Yaroshenko reduces the problems of the political economy of socialism to problems of the rational organization of the productive forces, to problems of economic planning, etc. But he is profoundly in error. The rational organization of the productive forces, economic planning, etc., are not the province of political economy, but the province of the economic policy of the directing bodies. They are two different provinces, which must not be confused. Comrade Yaroshenko has confused these two different things, and has made a terrible mess of it. Political economy investigates the laws of development of men's relations of production. Economic policy draws practical conclusions from this, gives them concrete shape, and builds its day-to-day work on them. To foist upon political economy problems of economic policy is to kill it as a science.

The province of political economy is the production, the economic, relations of men. It includes : a) the forms of ownership of the means of production ; b) the status of the various social groups in production and their interrelations that follow from these forms, or what Marx calls: "mutual exchange of their activities" ; c) the forms of distribution of products, which are entirely determined by them. All these together constitute the province of political economy.

This definition does not contain the word "exchange," which figures in Engels' definition. It is omitted because "exchange" is usually understood by many to mean exchange of commodities, which is characteristic not of all, but only of some social formations, and this sometimes gives rise to misunderstanding, even though the word "exchange" with Engels did not mean only commodity exchange. As will be seen, however, that which Engels meant by the word "exchange" has been included, as a component part, in the above definition. Hence, this definition of the province of political economy fully coincides in content with Engels' definition.

2. When speaking of the basic economic law of some particular social formation, the presumption usually is that the latter cannot have several basic economic laws, that it can have only some one basic economic law, which precisely for that reason is the *basic* law. Otherwise we should have several basic economic laws for each social formation, which would be contrary to the very concept of a basic law. But Comrade Yaroshenko does not agree with this. He thinks that it is possible to have not one, but several basic economic laws of socialism. It is incredible, but a fact. At the Plenary Discussion, he said :

"The magnitudes and correlations of the material funds of social production and reproduction are determined by the available labour power engaged in social production and its prospective increase. This is the basic economic law of socialist society, and it determines the structure of socialist social production and reproduction."

That is one basic economic law of socialism.

In this same speech Comrade Yaroshenko declared :

"In socialist society, the correlations between Departments I and II are determined by the need to produce means of production in quantities sufficient to enlist all the able-bodied members of the population in social production. This is the basic economic law of socialism, and it is at the same time a demand of our Constitution, following from the right to work enjoyed by Soviet citizens."

That, so to speak, is a second basic economic law of socialism.

Lastly, in his letter to the members of the Political Bureau, Comrade Yaroshenko declares :

"Accordingly, the essential features and requirements of the basic economic law of socialism may, it seems to me, be roughly formulated as follows : the continuous expansion and perfection of the production of the material and cultural conditions of life of society."

Here we have a third basic economic law of socialism.

Whether all these laws are basic economic laws of socialism, or only one of them, and if only one of them, which exactly—to these questions Comrade Yaroshenko gives no answer in his last letter addressed to the members of the Political Bureau. When formulating the basic economic law of socialism in his letter to the members of the Political Bureau he "forgot," it is to be presumed, that in his speech at the Plenary Discussion three months earlier he had already formulated two other basic economic laws of socialism, evidently believing that nobody would notice this dubious manoeuvre, to say the least of it. But, as we see, he miscalculated.

Let us assume that the first two basic economic laws of socialism formulated by Comrade Yaroshenko no longer exist, and that from now on he regards as the basic economic law of socialism the third one, which he formulated in his letter to the members of the Political Bureau. Let us turn to this letter.

Comrade Yaroshenko says in this letter that he does not agree with the definition of the basic economic law of socialism which Comrade Stalin gave in his "Remarks." He says :

"The chief thing in this definition is 'the securing of the maximum satisfaction of . . . the requirements of the whole of society.' Production is presented here as the means of attaining this principal aim—satisfaction of requirements. Such a definition furnishes grounds for assuming that the basic economic law of socialism formulated by you is based not on the primacy of production, but on the primacy of consumption."

It is evident that Comrade Yaroshenko has completely failed to understand the essence of the problem, and does not see that talk about the primacy of consumption or of production has absolutely nothing to do with the case. When speaking of the primacy of any social process over another, it is usually assumed that the two processes are more or less homogeneous in character. One may, and should, speak of the primacy of the production of means of production over the production of means of consumption, because production is involved in both cases, and they are therefore more or less homogeneous. But one cannot speak, and it would be wrong to speak, of the primacy of consumption over production, or of production over consumption, because production and consumption are two entirely different spheres, which, it is true, are connected with one another, but which are different spheres all the same. Comrade Yaroshenko obviously fails to realize that what we are speaking of here is not the primacy of consumption or of production, but of what *aim* society sets social production, to what *purpose* it subordinates social production—under socialism, say. So that when Comrade Yaroshenko says that "the basis of the life of socialist society, as of all other society, is production." it is entirely beside the point. Comrade Yaroshenko forgets that men produce not for production's sake, but in order to satisfy their needs. He forgets that production divorced from the satisfaction of the needs of society withers and dies.

Can we speak in general of the aims of capitalist or socialist production, of the purposes to which capitalist or socialist production are subordinated ? I think that we can and should.

Marx says :

"The direct aim of capitalist production is not the production of goods, but the production of surplus value, or of profit in its developed form ; not the product, but the surplus product. From this standpoint, labour itself is productive only in so far as it creates profit or surplus product for capital. In so far as the worker does not create it, his labour is unproductive. Consequently, the sum total of applied productive labour is of interest to capital only to the extent that through it—or in relation to it—the sum total of surplus labour increases. Only to that extent is what is called necessary labour time necessary. To the extent that it does not produce this result, it is superfluous and has to be discontinued.

"It is the constant aim of capitalist production to produce the maximum surplus value or surplus product with the minimum of capital advanced ; in so far as this result is not attained by overworking the labourer, it is a tendency of capital to seek to produce a given product with the least expenditure—economizing labour power and costs . . . .

"The labourers themselves figure in this conception as what they actually are in capitalist production—only means of production ; not an aim in themselves and not the aim of production." (See *Theories of Surplus Value,* Vol. II, Part 2.)

These words of Marx are remarkable not only because they concisely and precisely define the aim of capitalist production, but also because they indicate the basic aim, the principal purpose, which socialist production should be set.

Hence, the aim of capitalist production is profit-making. As to consumption, capitalism needs it only in so far as it ensures the making of profit. Outside of this, consumption means nothing to capitalism. Man and his needs disappear from its field of vision.

What is the aim of socialist production ? What is that main purpose to which social production should be subordinated under socialism ?

The aim of socialist production is not profit, but man and his needs, that is, the satisfaction of his material and cultural requirements. As is stated in Comrade Stalin's "Remarks," the aim of socialist production is "the securing of the maximum satisfaction of the constantly rising material and cultural requirements of the whole of society."

Comrade Yaroshenko thinks that what he is confronted with here is the "primacy" of consumption over production. That, of course, is an inanity. Actually, what we have here is not the primacy of consumption, but the *subordination* of socialist production to its principal aim of securing the maximum satisfaction of the constantly rising material and cultural requirements of the whole of society.

Consequently, maximum satisfaction of the constantly rising material and cultural requirements of the whole of society is the aim of socialist production ; continuous expansion and perfection of socialist production on the basis of higher techniques is the *means* for the achievement of the aim.

Such is the basic economic law of socialism.

Desiring to preserve what he calls the "primacy" of production over consumption, Comrade Yaroshenko claims that the "basic economic law of socialism" consists in "the continuous expansion and perfection of the production of the material and cultural conditions of society." That is absolutely wrong. Comrade Yaroshenko grossly distorts and vitiates the formula given in Comrade Stalin's "Remarks." With him, production is converted from a means into an end, and the maximum satisfaction of the constantly rising material and cultural requirements of society is thrown out. What we get is expansion of production for the sake of expansion of production, production as an aim in itself ; man and his requirements disappear from Comrade Yaroshenko's field of vision.

It is therefore not surprising that, with the disappearance of man as the aim of socialist production, every vestige of Marxism disappears from Comrade Yaroshenko's "conception."

And so, what Comrade Yaroshenko arrives at is not the "primacy" of production over consumption, but something like the "primacy" of bourgeois ideology over Marxist ideology.

3. A question by itself is Marx's theory of reproduction. Comrade Yaroshenko asserts that the Marxian theory of reproduction is a theory of capitalist reproduction only, that it contains nothing that might have validity for other social formations, the socialist social formation in particular. He says :

"The extension of Marx's scheme of reproduction, which he elaborated for the capitalist economy, to socialist social production is the fruit of a dogmatic understanding of Marx's theory and runs counter to the essence of his theory." (See Comade Yaroshenko's speech at the Plenary Discussion.)

He further asserts : "Marx's scheme of reproduction does not correspond to the economic laws of socialist society and cannot serve as a basis in the investigation of socialist reproduction." (*Ibid.*)

Concerning Marx's theory of simple reproduction, which establishes a definite correlation between the production of means of production (Department I) and the production of means of consumption (Department II), Comrade Yaroshenko says :

"In socialist society, the correlation between Departments I and II is not determined by Marx's formula v + s of Department I and c of Department II. There should be no such interconnection in development between Departments I and II under socialist conditions." (*Ibid.*)

He asserts: "The theory of the correlation between Departments I and II worked out by Marx is not applicable in our socialist conditions, since Marx's theory is based on capitalist economy and its laws." (See Comrade Yaroshenko's letter to the members of the Political Bureau.)

That is how Comrade Yaroshenko makes mincemeat of Marx's theory of reproduction.

Of course, Marx's theory of reproduction, which was the fruit of an investigation of the laws of the capitalist mode of production, reflects the specific character of the latter, and naturally, is clothed in the form of capitalist-commodity value relations. It could not have been otherwise. But he who sees in Marx's theory of reproduction only its form, and does not observe its fundamentals, its essential substance, which holds good not only for the capitalist social formation alone, has no understanding whatever of this theory. If Comrade Yaroshenko had any understanding at all of the matter, he would have realized the self-evident truth that Marx's schemes of reprodction do not begin and end with a reflection of the specific character of the capitalist mode of production, that they at the same time contain a whole number of fundamental tenets on the subject of reproduction which hold good for all social formations, particularly and especially for the socialist social formation. Such fundamental tenets of the Marxian theory of reproduction as the division of social production into the production of means of production and the production of means of consumption ; the relatively greater increase of production of means of production in reproduction on an extended scale ; the correlation between Departments I and II ; surplus product as the sole source of accumulation ; the formation and designation of the social funds ; accumulation as the sole source of reproduction on an extended scale—all these fundamental tenets of the Marxian theory of reproduction are at the same time tenets which hold good not only for the capitalist formation, and which no socialist society can dispense with in the planning of its national economy. It is significant that Comrade Yaroshenko himself, who snorts so haughtily at Marx's "schemes of reproduction," is obliged every now and again to call in the aid of these "schemes" when discussing problems of socialist reproduction.

And how did Lenin and Marx view the matter?

Everyone is familiar with Lenin's crittcal comments on Bukharin's *Economics of the Transition Period.* In these remarks, as we know, Lenin recognized that Marx's formula of the correlations between Departments I and II, against which Comrade Yaroshenko takes up the cudgels, holds true both for socialism and for "pure communism," that is, for the second phase of communism.

As to Marx, he, as we know, did not like to digress from his investigation of the laws of capitalist production, and did not, in his *Capital,* discuss the applicability of his schemes of reproduction to socialism. However, in Chapter XX, Vol. II of *Capital,* in the section, "The Constant Capital of Department I," where he examines the exchange of Department I products within this department, Marx, as though in passing, observes that under socialism the exchange of products within this department would proceed with the same regularity as under the capitalist mode of production. He says:

> "If production were socialized, instead of capitalistic, it is evident that these products of Department I would just as regularly be redistributed as means of production to the various lines of production of this department, for purposes of reproduction, one portion remaining directly in that sphere of production which created it, another passing over to other lines of production of the same department, thereby entertaining a constant mutual exchange between the various lines of production of this department." (See Marx, *Capital,* Vol. II, 8th ed., p. 307.)

Consequently, Marx by no means considered that his theory of reproduction was valid only for the capitalist mode of production, although it was the laws of the capitalist mode of production he was investigating. We see, on the contrary, that he held that his theory of reproduction might be valid also for the socialist mode of production.

It should be remarked that, when analyzing the economics of socialism and of the transitional period to communism in his *Critique of the Gotha Program,* Marx proceeds from the fundamental tenets of his theory of reproduction, evidently regarding them as obligatory for the communist system.

It should also be remarked that when Engels, in his *Anti-Dühring,* criticizes Dühring's "socialitarian system" and discusses the economics of the socialist system, he likewise proceeds from the fundamental tenets of Marx's theory of reproduction, regarding them as obligatory for the communist system.

Such are the facts.

It appears, then, that here too, in the question of reproduction, Comrade Yaroshenko, despite his sneering attitude towards Marx's "schemes," has again landed on the shoals.

4. Comrade Yaroshenko concludes his letter to the members of the Political Bureau with the proposal that the compilation of the "Political Economy of Socialism" be entrusted to him. He writes :

"On the basis of the definition of the province of the political-economic science of socialism outlined by me at the plenary meeting, in the working panel, and in the present letter, and utilizing the Marxian dialectical method, I could, with the help of two assistants, work out in the space of one year, or a year and a half at most, the theoretical solution of the basic problems of the political economy of socialism ; expound the Marxist, Leninist-Stalinist theory of the political economy of socialism, a theory which would convert this science into an effective weapon of the struggle of the people for communism."

It must be confessed that modesty is not one of Comrade Yaroshenko's failings—"even the other way round," it might be said, borrowing the style of some of our writers.

It has already been pointed out above that Comrade Yaroshenko confuses the political economy of socialism with the economic policy of the directing bodies. That which he considers the province of the political economy of socialism—rational organization of the productive forces, economic planning, formation of social funds, etc.—is the province of the economic policy of the directing bodies, and not of the political economy of socialism.

I say nothing of the fact that the serious blunders committed by Comrade Yaroshenko, and his un-Marxist "opinion" do not incline one to entrust him with such a task.

* * *

Conclusions :

1) The complaint Comrade Yaroshenko levels at the managers of the discussion is untenable, since they, being Marxists,

could not in their summarizing documents reflect his un-Marxist "opinion";

2) Comrade Yaroshenko's request to be entrusted with the writing of the Political Economy of Socialism cannot be taken seriously, if only because it reeks of Khlestakovism.

J. STALIN

May 22, 1952

Reply to Comrades
A. V. Sanina and V. G. Venzher

I have received your letters. It can be seen from them that their authors are making a profound and serious study of the economic problems of our country. There are quite a number of correct formulations and interesting arguments in the letters. But alongside of these, there are some grave theoretical errors. It is on these errors that I propose to dwell in this reply.

1. CHARACTER OF THE ECONOMIC LAWS OF SOCIALISM

Comrades Sanina and Venzher claim that "only because of the conscious action of the Soviet citizens engaged in material production do the economic laws of socialism arise." This opinion is absolutely incorrect.

Do the laws of economic development exist objectively, outside of us, independently of the will and consciousness of man? Marxism answers this question in the affirmative. Marxism holds that the laws of the political economy of socialism are a reflection in the minds of men of objective laws existing outside of us. But Comrades Sanina's and Venzher's formula answers this question in the negative. That means that these comrades are adopting the position of an incorrect theory which asserts that under socialism the laws of economic development are "created," "transformed" by the directing bodies of society. In other words, they are breaking with Marxism and taking the stand of subjective idealism.

Of course, men can discover these objective laws, come to know them and, relying upon them, utilize them in the interests of society. But they cannot "create" them, nor can they "transform" them.

Suppose for a moment that we accepted this incorrect theory which denies the existence of objective laws of economic activity under socialism, and which proclaims the possibility of "creating" and "transforming" economic laws. Where would it lead us? It would lead us into the realm of chaos and chance, we should find ourselves in slavish dependence on chance, and we should be forfeiting the possibility not only of understanding, but of simply finding our way about in this chaos of chances.

The effect would be that we should be destroying political economy as a science, because science cannot exist and develop unless it recognizes the existence of objective laws, and studies them. And by destroying science, we should be forfeiting the possibility of foreseeing the course of developments in the economic life of the country, in other words, we should be forfeiting the possibility of providing even the most elementary economic leadership.

In the end we should find ourselves at the mercy of "economic" adventurers who are ready to "destroy" the laws of economic development and to "create" new laws without any understanding of, or consideration for objective law.

Everyone is familiar with the classic formulation of the Marxist position on this question given by Engels in his *Anti-Dühring*:

"The forces operating in society work exactly like the forces operating in nature: blindly, violently, destructively, so long as we do not understand them and fail to take them into account. But when once we have come to know them and understand how they work, their direction and their effects, the gradual subjection of them to our will and the use of them for the attainment of our aims depend entirely upon ourselves. And this is especially true of the mighty productive forces of the present day. So long as we obstinately refuse to understand their nature and their character—and the capitalist mode of production and its defenders set themselves against any such attempt—these forces operate in spite of us, against us, dominate us, as we have shown in detail. But once their nature is grasped, in the hands of the producers working in association they can be transformed from demoniacal masters into willing servants. This is the difference between the destructive force of electricity in the lightning of a thunderstorm and the tamed electricity of the telegraph and the arc light; the difference between a conflagration and fire in the service of man. Such treatment of today's productive forces in accordance with their nature, now become known at last, opens the way to the replacement of the anarchy of social production by a socially planned regulation of production in accordance with the needs both of society as a whole and of each individual. The capitalist mode of appropriation, in which the product enslaves first the producer, and then also the appropriator, will thereby be replaced by the mode of appropriation of the product based on the nature of the modern means of production themselves : on the one hand direct social appropriation as a means to the maintenance and extension of production, and on the other hand direct individual appropriation as a means to life and pleasure."

2. MEASURES FOR ELEVATING COLLECTIVE-FARM PROPERTY TO THE LEVEL OF PUBLIC PROPERTY

What measures are necessary to raise collective-farm property, which, of course, is not public property, to the level of public ("national") property ?

Some comrades think that the thing to do is simply to nationalize collective-farm property : to proclaim it public property, in the way that was done in the past in the case of capitalist property. Such a proposal would be absolutely wrong and quite unacceptable. Collective-farm property is socialist property, and we simply cannot treat it in the same way as capitalist property. From the fact that collective-farm property is not public property, it by no means follows that it is not socialist property.

These comrades believe that the conversion of the property of individuals or groups of individuals into state property is the only, or at any rate the best, form of nationalization. That is not true. The fact is that conversion into state property is not the only, or even the best, form of nationalization, but the initial form of nationalization, as Engels quite rightly says in *Anti-Dühring*. Unquestionably, so long as the state exists, conversion into state property is the most natural initial form of nationalization. But the state will not exist forever. With the extension of the sphere of operation of socialism in the majority of the countries of the world the state will die away, and, of course, the conversion of the property of individuals or groups of individuals into state property will consequently lose its meaning. The state will have died away, but society will remain. Hence, the heir of the public property will then be not the state, which will have died away, but society itself, in the shape of a central, directing economic body.

That being so, what must be done to raise collective-farm property to the level of public property?

The proposal made by Comrades Sanina and Venzher as the chief means of achieving such an elevation of collective-farm property is to sell the basic implements of production concentrated in the Machine and Tractor Stations to the collective farms as their property, thus releasing the state from the necessity of making capital investments in agriculture, and to make the collective farms themselves responsible for the maintenance and development of the machine and tractor stations. They say:

"It is wrong to believe that collective-farm investments must be used chiefly for the cultural needs of the collective-farm village, while the greater bulk of the investments for the needs of agricultural production must continue as hitherto to be borne by the state. Would it not be more correct to relieve the state of this burden, seeing that the collective farms are fully capable of taking it entirely upon themselves? The state will have plenty of undertakings in which to invest its funds with a view to creating an abundance of articles of consumption in the country."

The authors advance several arguments in support of their proposal.

First. Referring to Stalin's statement that means of production are not sold even to the collective farms, the authors of the proposal cast doubt on this statement of Stalin's by declaring that the state, after all, does sell means of production to the collective farms, such as minor implements, like scythes and sickles, small power engines, etc. They consider that if the state can sell such means of production to the collective farms, it might also sell them all other means of production, such as the machines of the MTS.

This argument is untenable. The state, of course, does sell minor implements to the collective farms, as, indeed, it has to in compliance with the Rules of the Agricultural Artel and the Constitution. But can we lump in one category minor implements and such basic agricultural means of production as the machines of the MTS's, or, let us say, the land, which, after all, is also one of the basic means of production in agriculture ? Obviously not. They cannot be lumped in one category because minor implements do not in any degree decide the fate of collective-farm production, whereas such means of production as the machines of the MTS's and the land entirely decide the fate of agriculture in our present-day conditions.

It should not be difficult to understand that when Stalin said that means of production are not sold to the collective farms, it was not minor implements he had in mind, but the basic means of agricultural production : the machines of the MTS's, the land. The authors are playing with the words "means of production" and are confusing two different things, without observing that they are getting into a mess.

Second. Comrades Sanina and Venzher further refer to the fact that in the early period of the mass collective-farm movement —end of 1929 and beginning of 1930—the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) was itself in favour of transferring the machine and tractor stations to the collective farms as their property, requiring them to pay off the cost of the MTS's over a period of three years. They consider that although nothing came of this at the time, "in view of the poverty" of the collective farms, now that they have become wealthy it might be expedient to return to this policy, namely, the sale of the MTS's to the collective farms.

This argument is likewise untenable. A decision actually was adopted by the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) in the early part of 1930 to sell the MTS's to the collective farms. It was adopted at the suggestion of a group of collective-farm shock workers as an experiment, as a trial, with the idea of reverting to the question at an early date and re-examining it. But the first trial demonstrated the inadvisability of this decision, and a few months later, namely, at the close of 1930, it was rescinded.

The subsequent spread of the collective-farm movement and the development of collective-farm construction definitely convinced both the collective farmers and the leading officials that concentration of the basic implements of agricultural production in the hands of the state, in the hands of the machine and tractor stations, was the only way of ensuring a high rate of expansion of collective-farm production.

We are all gratified by the tremendous strides agricultural production in our country is making, by the increasing output of grain, cotton, flax, sugar beet, etc. What is the source of this increase? It is the up-to-date technical equipment, the numerous up-to-date machines which are serving all these branches of production. It is not a question of machinery generally; the question is that machinery cannot remain at a standstill, it must be perfected all the time, old machinery being scrapped and replaced by new, and the new by newer still. Without this, the onward march of our socialist agriculture would be impossible; big harvests and an abundance of agricultural produce would be out of the question. But what is involved in scrapping hundreds of thousands of wheel tractors and replacing them by caterpillar tractors, in replacing tens of thousands of obsolete harvester-combines by more up-to-date ones, in creating new machines, say, for industrial crops? It involves an expenditure of billions of rubles which can be recouped only after the lapse of six or eight years. Are our collective farms capable of bearing such an expense, even though their incomes may run into the millions? No, they are not, since they are not in the position to undertake the expenditure of billions of rubles which may be recouped only after a period of six or eight years. Such expenditures can be borne only by the state, for it, and it alone, is in the position to bear the loss involved by the scrapping of old machines and replacing them by new; because it, and it alone, is in a position to bear such losses for six or eight years and only then recover the outlays.

What, in view of this, would be the effect of selling the MTS's to the collective farms as their property? The effect would be to involve the collective farms in heavy loss and to ruin them, to undermine the mechanization of agriculture, and to slow up the development of collective-farm production.

The conclusion therefore is that, in proposing that the MTS's should be sold to the collective farms as their property, Comrades Sanina and Venzher are suggesting a step in reversion to the old backwardness and are trying to turn back the wheel of history.

Assuming for a moment that we accepted Comrades Sanina's and Venzher's proposal and began to sell the basic instruments of production, the machine and tractor stations, to the collective farms as their property. What would be the outcome?

The outcome would be, first, that the collective farms would become the owners of the basic instruments of production ; that is, their status would be an exceptional one, such as is not shared by any other enterprise in our country, for, as we know, even the nationalized enterprises do not own their instruments of production. How, by what considerations of progress and advancement, could this exceptional status of the collective farms be justified ? Can it be said that such a status would facilitate the elevation of collective-farm property to the level of public property, that it would expedite the transition of our society from socialism to communism ? Would it not be truer to say that such a status could only enlarge the gap between collective-farm property and public property, and would not bring us any nearer to communism, but, on the contrary, remove us farther from it ?

The outcome would be, secondly, an extension of the sphere of operation of commodity circulation, because a gigantic quantity of instruments of agricultural production would come within its orbit. What do Comrades Sanina and Venzher think—is the extension of the sphere of commodity circulation calculated to promote our advance towards communism ? Would it not be truer to say that our advance towards communism would only be retarded by it ?

Comrades Sanina's and Venzher's basic error lies in the fact that they do not understand the role and significance of commodity circulation under socialism ; that they do not understand that commodity circulation is incompatible with the prospective transition from socialism to communism. They evidently think that the transition from socialism to communism is possible even with commodity circulation, that commodity circulation can be no obstacle to this. That is a profound error, arising from an inadequate grasp of Marxism.

Criticizing Dühring's "economic commune" which functions in the conditions of commodity circulation, Engels, in his *Anti-Dühring,* convincingly shows that the existence of commodity circulation was inevitably bound to lead Dühring's so-called "economic communes" to the regeneration of capitalism. Comrades Sanina and Venzher evidently do not agree with this. All the worse for them. But we, Marxists, adhere to the Marxist view that the transition from socialism to communism and the communist principle of distribution of products according to needs preclude all commodity exchange, and, hence, preclude the conversion of products into commodities, and, with it, their conversion into value.

So much for the proposal and arguments of Comrades Sanina and Venzher.

But what, then, should be done to elevate collective-farm property to the level of public property ?

The collective farm is an unusual kind of enterprise. It operates on land and cultivates land which has long been public, and not collective-farm property. Consequently, the collective farm is not the owner of the land it cultivates.

Further, the collective farm operates with basic implements of production which are public, not collective-farm property. Consequently, the collective farm is not the owner of its basic implements of production.

Further, the collective farm is a cooperative enterprise : it utilizes the labour of its members, and it distributes its income among its members on the basis of workday units ; it owns its seed, which is renewed every year and goes into production.

What, then, does the collective farm own ? Where is the collective-farm property which it disposes of quite freely, at its own discretion ? This property of the collective farm is its product, the product of collective farming : grain, meat, butter, vegetables, cotton, sugar beet, flax, etc., not counting the buildings and the personal husbandry of the collective farmers on their household plots. The fact is that a considerable part of this product, the surplus collective-farm output, goes into the market and is thus included in the system of commodity circulation. It is precisely this circumsatnce which now prevents the elevation of collective-farm property to the level of public property. It is therefore precisely from this end that the work of elevating collective-farm property to the level of public property must be tackled.

In order to raise collective-farm property to the level of public property, the surplus collective-farm output must be excluded from the system of commodity circulation and included in the system of products-exchange between state industry and the collective farms. That is the point.

We still have no developed system of products-exchange, but the rudiments of such a system exist in the shape of the "merchandising" of agricultural products. For quite a long time already, as we know, the products of the cotton-growing, flax-growing, beet-growing and other collective farms are "merchandised." They are not "merchandised" in full, it is true, but only partly, still they are "merchandised." Be it mentioned in passing that "merchandising" is not a happy word, and should be replaced by "products-exchange." The task is to extend these rudiments of products-exchange to all branches of agriculture and to develop them into a broad system, under which the collective farms would receive for their products not only money, but also and chiefly the manufactures they need. Such a system would require an immense increase in the goods allocated by the town to the country, and it would therefore have to be introduced without any particular hurry, and only as the products of the town multiply. But it must be introduced unswervingly and unhesitatingly, step by step contracting the sphere of operation of commodity circulation and widening the sphere of operation of products-exchange.

Such a system, by contracting the sphere of operation of commodity circulation, will facilitate the transition from socialism to communism. Moreover, it will make it possible to include the basic property of the collective farms, the product of collective farming, in the general system of national planning.

That will be a real and effective means of raising collective-farm property to the level of public property under our present-day conditions.

Will such a system be advantageous to the collective-farm peasantry? It undoubtedly will. It will, because the collective-farm peasantry will receive far more products from the state than under commodity circulation, and at much cheaper prices. Everyone knows that the collective farms which have products-exchange ("merchandising") contracts with the government receive incomparably greater advantages than the collective farms which have no such contracts. If the products-exchange system is extended to all the collective farms in the country, these advantages will become available to all our collective-farm peasantry.

J. STALIN

September 28, 1952

On Problems of Organizational Leadership

Some people think that it is sufficient to draw up a correct Party line, proclaim it from the housetops, state it in the form of general theses and resolutions, and take a vote and carry it unanimously for victory to come of itself, spontaneously, as it were. This, of course, is wrong. It is a gross delusion. Only incorrigible bureaucrats and red-tapists can think so. As a matter of fact, these successes and victories did not come spontaneously, but as the result of a fierce struggle for the application of the Party line. Victory never comes by itself—it usually has to be attained. Good resolutions and declarations in favour of the general line of the Party are only a beginning ; they merely express the desire for victory, but not the victory itself. After the correct line has been laid down, after a correct solution of the problem has been found, success depends on how the work is organized ; on the organization of the struggle for the application of the Party line ; on the proper selection of personnel ; on the way a check is kept on the fulfilment of the decisions of the leading bodies. Otherwise the correct line of the Party and the correct solutions are in danger of being seriously prejudiced.

Furthermore, after the correct political line has been laid down, organizational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, its success or failure.

As a matter of fact, victory was achieved and won by a stern and systematic struggle against all sorts of difficulties that stood in the way of carrying out the Party line ; by overcoming the difficulties ; by mobilizing the Party and the working-class for the purpose of overcoming the difficulties ; by organizing the struggle to overcome the difficulties ; by removing inefficient executives and choosing better ones, capable of waging the struggle against difficulties.

What are these difficulties ; and wherein are they lodged ?

They are difficulties attending our organizational work, difficulties attending our organizational leadership. They are lodged in ourselves, in our leading people, in our organizations, in the apparatus of our Party, state, economic, trade union, Young Communist League, and all other organizations....

Beureaucracy and red tape in the administrative apparatus ; idle chatter about "leadership in general" instead of real and concrete leadership ; the functional structure of our organizations and lack of individual responsibility ; lack of personal responsibility in work, and wage equalization ; the absence of a systematic check upon the fulfilment of decisions ; fear of self-criticism—these are the sources of our difficulties ; this is where our difficulties are now lodged.

It would be naive to think that these difficulties can be overcome by means of resolutions and decisions. The bureaucrats have long become past-masters in the art of demonstrating their loyalty to Party and government decisions in words, and pigeonholing them in deed. In order to overcome these difficulties it was necessary to put an end to the disparity between our organizational work and the requirements of the political line of the Party ; it was necessary to raise the level of organizational leadership in all spheres of the national economy to the level of political leadership ; it was necessary to see to it that our organizational work guarantees the practical realization of the political slogans and decisions of the Party.

In order to overcome these difficulties and achieve success it was necessary to *organize* the struggle to eliminate these difficulties ; it was necessary to draw the masses of the workers and peasants into this struggle ; it was necessary to mobilize the Party itself ; it was necessary to purge the Party and the economic organizations of unreliable, unstable and demoralized elements.

What was needed for this ?

We had to organize :

1. Extensive self-criticism and exposure of the defects in our work ;

2. The mobilization of the Party, state, economic, trade union, and Young Communist League organizations for the struggle against difficulties ;

3. The mobilization of the masses of the workers and peasants

to fight for the application of the slogans and decisions of the Party and the Government ;

4. The extension of emulation and shock work among the working people ;

5. A wide network of Political Departments of machine and tractor stations and state farms and the bringing of the Party and Soviet leadership closer to the villages ;

6. The division of the People's Commissariats, head offices, and trusts, and the establishment of closer contact between the business leadership and the enterprises ;

7. The elimination of lack of personal responsibility in work and the elimination of wage equalization ;

8. The abolition of the "functional" system, the extension of individual responsibility, and a policy directed towards doing away with collegium management ;

9. The exercise of greater control over the fulfilment of decisions, while taking the line towards reorganizing the Central Control Commission and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with a view to the further enhancement of the work of checking up on the fulfilment of decisions ;

10. The transfer of qualified workers from offices to posts that will bring them into closer contact with production ;

11. The exposure and expulsion from the administrative apparatus of incorrigible bureaucrats and red-tapists ;

12. The removal from their posts of people who violate the decisions of the Party and the Government, of "window-dressers" and windbags, and promotion to their place of new people—business-like people, capable of concretely directing the work entrusted to them and of tightening Party and state discipline ;

13. The purging of state and economic organizations and the reduction of their staffs ;

14. Lastly, the purging of the Party of unreliable and demoralized persons.

These, in the main, are the measures which the Party has had to adopt in order to overcome difficulties, to raise our organizational work to the level of political leadership, and in this way to ensure the application of the Party line.

You know that this is exactly how the Central Committee of the Party carried on its organizational work during the period under review.

In this, the Central Committee was guided by the brilliant thought uttered by Lenin to the effect that the main thing in organizational work is—*choosing the right people and keeping a check on the fulfilment of decisions.*

In regard to choosing the right people and dismissing those who fail to justify the confidence placed in them, I would like to say a few words.

Apart from the incorrigible bureaucrats and red-tapists as to whose removal there are no differences of opinion among us, there are two other types of executives who retard our work, hinder our work, and hold up our advance.

One of these types of executives is represented by people who rendered certain services in the past, people who have become aristocrats, who consider that Party decisions and the laws issued by the Soviet Government are not written for them, but for fools. These are the people who do not consider it their duty to fulfil the decisions of the Party and of the Government, and who thus destroy the foundations of Party and state discipline. What do they count upon when they violate Party and Soviet laws ? They presume that the Soviet Government will not have the courage to touch them, because of their past services. These over-conceited aristocrats think that they are irreplaceable, and that they can violate the decisions of the leading bodies with impunity. What is to be done with executives of this kind ? They must unhesitatingly be removed from their leading posts, irrespective of past services. (*Voices : "Hear, hear !"*) They must be demoted to lower positions, and this must be announced in the Press. (*Voices : "Hear, hear !"*) This must be done in order to knock the pride out of these over-conceited aristocrat-bureaucrats, and to put them in their proper place. This must be done in order to tighten up Party and Soviet discipline in the whole of our work. (*Voices : "Hear, hear !"*) (*Applause.*)

And now about the second type of executives. I have in mind the windbags. I would say, honest windbags (*laughter*), people who are honest and loyal to the Soviet Government, but who are incompetent as executives, incapable of organizing anything. Last year I had a conversation with one such comrade, a very respected comrade, but an incorrigible windbag, capable of drowning any living cause in a flood of talk. Here is the conversation.

I : How are you getting on with the sowing ?

He : With the sowing, Comrade Stalin ? We have mobilized ourselves. (*Laughter.*)

I : Well, and what then ?

He : We have put the question squarely. (*Laughter.*)

I : And what next ?

He : There is a turn, Comrade Stalin ; soon there will be a turn. (*Laughter.*)

I : But still ?

He : We can say that there is an indication of some progress. (*Laughter.*)

I : But for all that, how are you getting on with the sowing ?

He : So far, Comrade Stalin, we have not made any headway with the sowing. (*General Laughter.*)

Here you have the physiognomy of the windbag. They have mobilized themselves, they have put the question squarely, they have made a turn and some progress, but things remain as they were.

This is exactly how a Ukrainian worker recently described the state of a certain organization when he was asked whether that organization had any definite line : "Well," he said, "they have a line all right, but they don't seem to be doing any work." (*General laughter.*) Evidently that organization also has its quota of honest windbags.

And when such windbags are dismissed from their posts and are given jobs far removed from operative work, they shrug their shoulders in perplexity and ask : "Why have we been dismissed ? Did we not do all that was necessary to get the work done ? Did we not organize a rally of shock workers ? Did we not proclaim the slogans of the Party and of the government at the conference of shock workers ? Did we not elect the whole of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee to the Honorary Presidium ? (*General laughter.*) Did we not send greetings to Comrade Stalin —what more do they want of us ?" (*Loud laughter.*)

What is to be done with these incorrigible windbags ? Why, if they were allowed to remain on operative work they would drown every living cause in a flood of watery and endless speeches. Obviously, they must be removed from leading posts and given work other than operative work. There is no place for windbags on operative work. (*Voices : "Hear, hear !" Applause.*)

I have already briefly reported on how the Central Committee handled the selection of personnel for the Soviet and economic organizations, and how it pursued the work of keeping a closer check on the fulfilment of decisions. Comrade Kaganovich will deal with this in greater detail in his report on the third item of the agenda of the Congress.

I would like to say a few words, however, about future work in connection with the task of keeping a closer check on the fulfilment of decisions.

The proper organization of the work of checking up on the fulfilment of decisions is of decisive importance in the fight against bureaucracy and office routine. Are the decisions of the leading bodies carried out, or are they pigeon-holed by bureaucrats and red-tapists ? Are they carried out properly, or are they distorted ? Is the apparatus working conscientiously and in a Bolshevik manner, or is it running with the clutch out ? These things can be promptly found out only if a proper check is kept on the fulfilment of decisions. A proper check on the fulfilment of decisions is a searchlight which helps to reveal how the apparatus is functioning at any moment, exposing bureaucrats and red-tapists to full view. We can say with certainty that nine-tenths of our defects and failures are due to the lack of a properly organized system of check-up on the fulfilment of decisions. There can be no doubt that had there been such a system of check-up on fulfilment defects and failure would certainly have been averted.

But for the work of checking up on fulfilment to achieve its purpose, two conditions at least are required : first, that fulfilment be checked up systematically and not spasmodically ; second, that the work of checking up on fulfilment in all the links of the Party, state, and economic organizations be entrusted not to second-rate people, but to people with sufficient authority, the leaders of the organizations concerned. . . .

Our tasks in the sphere of organizational work are :

1. To continue to adapt our organizational work to the requirements of the political line of the Party ;

2. To raise organizational leadership to the level of political leadership ;

3. To see to it that organizational leadership is fully equal to the task of ensuring the realization of the political slogans and decisions of the Party.

CADRES DECIDE EVERYTHING

. . . The old slogan, "Technique decides everything," which is a reflection of a period already passed, a period in which we suffered from a dearth in technique, must now be replaced by a new slogan, the slogan "Cadres decide everything". That is the main thing now.

Can it be said that our people have fully grasped and realized the great significance of this new slogan ? I would not say that. Otherwise, there would not have been the outrageous attitude towards people, towards cadres,[1] towards workers, which we not infrequently observed in practice. The slogan "Cadres decide everything" demands that our leaders should display the most solicitous attitude towards our workers, "little" and "big," no matter in what sphere they are engaged, cultivating them assiduously, assisting them when they need support, encouraging them when they show their first successes, promoting them, and so forth. Yet in practice we meet in a number of cases with a soulless, bureaucratic, and positively outrageous attitude towards workers. This, indeed, explains why instead of being studied, and placed at their posts only after being studied, people are frequently flung about like pawns. People have learned to value machinery and to make reports on how many machines we have in our mills and factories. But I do not know of a single instance when a report was made with equal zest on the number of people we have trained in a given period, on how we have assisted people to grow and become tempered in their work. How is this to be explained ? It is to be explained by the fact that we have not yet learned to value people, to value workers, to value cadres.

I recall an incident in Siberia, where I lived at one time in exile. It was in the spring, at the time of the spring floods. About thirty men went to the river to pull out timber which had been carried away by the vast, swollen river. Towards evening they returned to the village, but with one comrade missing. When asked where the thirtieth man was, they replied indifferently that the thirtieth man had "remained there". To my question, "How do you mean, remained there ?" they replied with the same indifference, "Why ask—drowned, of course". And thereupon one of them began to hurry away, saying, "I've got to go and water the mare". When I reproached them with having more concern for animals than for men, one of them said, amid the general approval of the rest : "Why should we be concerned about men ? We can always make men. But a mare . . . just try and make a mare".

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[1] *Cadres.* The word means literally a frame or framework. The comrades on whom the Party, throughout its various units of organization, can mainly depend to carry it forward are a living framework which must be constantly renewed and strengthened in the ways described here by Stalin and Dimitrov. Cadres are the new forces which must be developed and fitted for positions of responsibility in leadership.—*Ed.*

Here you have a case, not very significant perhaps, but very characteristic. It seems to me that indifference of certain of our leaders to people, to cadres, their inability to value people, is a survival of that strange attitude of man to man displayed in the episode in far-off Siberia that I have just related.

And so, comrades, if we want successfully to get over the dearth in people and to provide our country with sufficient cadres capable of advancing technique and setting it going, we must first of all learn to value people, to value cadres, to value every worker capable of benefiting our common cause.

It is time to realise that of all the valuable capital the world possesses, the most valuable and most decisive is people, cadres. It must be realized that, under our present conditions, "Cadres decide everything". If we have good and numerous cardes in industry, agriculture, transport and the army, our country will be invincible. If we do not have such cadres, we shall be lame in both legs.

In concluding my speech, permit me to offer a toast to the health and success of our graduates from the Red Army Academies. I wish them success in the work of organizing and directing the defence of our country.

Comrades, you have graduated from institutions of higher learning, in which you received your first tempering. But school is only a preparatory stage. Cadres receive their real tempering in practical work, outside school, in fighting difficulties, in overcoming difficulties. Remember, comrades, that only those cadres are any good who do not fear difficulties, who do not hide from difficulties, but who, on the contrary, go out to meet difficulties, in order to overcome them and eliminate them. It is only in the fight against difficulties that real cadres are forged. And if our army possesses genuinely steeled cadres in sufficient numbers, it will be invincible.

Your health, Comrades!

SELECTION, PROMOTION AND ALLOCATION OF CADRES

A correct political line is not needed as a declaration, but as something to be carried into effect. But in order to carry a correct political line into effect, we must have cadres, people who understand the political line of the Party, who accept it as their own line, who are prepared to carry it into effect, who are able to put it into practice and are capable of answering for it, defending it and fighting for it. Failing this, a correct political line runs the risk of being purely nominal.

And here arises the question of the correct selection of cadres, the training of cadres, the promotion of new people, the correct allocation of cadres, and the testing of cadres by work accomplished.

What is meant by the correct selection of cadres?

The correct selection of cadres does not mean just gathering around one a lot of assistants and subs, setting up an office and issuing order after order (*Laughter.*) Nor does it mean abusing one's powers, switching scores and hundreds of people back and forth from one job to another without rhyme or reason and conducting endless "reorganizations." (*Laughter.*)

The proper selection of cadres means:

Firstly, valuing cadres as the gold reserve of the Party and the State, treasuring them, respecting them.

Secondly, knowing cadres, carefully studying their individual merits and shortcomings, knowing in what post the capacities of a given worker are most likely to develop.

Thirdly, carefully fostering cadres, helping every promising worker to advance, not grudging time on patiently "bothering" with such workers and accelerating their development.

Fourthly, boldly promoting new and young cadres in time, so as not to allow them to stagnate in their old posts and grow stale.

Fifthly, allocating workers to posts in such a way that each feels he is in the right place, that each may contribute to our common cause the maximum his personal capacities enable him to contribute, and that the general trend of the work of allocating cadres may fully answer to the demands of the political line for the carrying out of which this allocation of cadres is designed.

Particularly important in this respect is the bold and timely promotion of new and young cadres. It seems to me that our people are not quite clear on this point yet. Some think that in selecting people we must chiefly rely on the old cadres. Others, on the contrary, think that we must chiefly rely on young cadres. It seems to me that both are mistaken.

The old cadres, of course, represent a valuable asset to the Party and the State. They possess what the young cadres lack, namely, tremendous experience in leadership, a schooling in Marxist-Leninist principles, knowledge of affairs, and a capacity for oriention. But firstly, there are never enough old cadres, there are far less than required, and they are already partly going out of commission owing to the operation of the laws of nature. Secondly, part of the old cadres are sometimes inclined to keep a too persistent eye on the past, to cling to the past, to stay in the old rut and fail to observe the new in life. This is called losing the sense of the new. It is a very serious and dangerous shortcoming.

As to the young cadres, they, of course, have not the experience, the schooling, the knowledge of affairs and the capacity of orientation of the old cadres. But, firstly, the young cadres constitute the vast majority ; secondly, they are young, and as yet are not subject to the danger of going out of commission ; thirdly, they possess in abundance the sense of the new, which is a valuable quality in every Bolshevik worker ; and, fourthly, they develop and acquire knowledge so rapidly, they press upward so eagerly, that the time is not far off when they will overtake the old fellows, take their stand side by side with them, and become worthy of replacing them. Consequently, the thing is not whether to rely on the old cadres or on the new cadres, but to steer for a combination, a union of the old and the young cadres in one common symphony of leadership of the Party and the State. (*Prolonged applause.*)

That is why we must boldly and in good time promote young cadres to leading posts.

One of the important achievements of the Party during the period under review, in the matter of stregthening the Party leadership is that, when selecting cadres, it has sucessfully pursued from top to bottom, just this course of combining old and young workers.

Data in the possession of the Central Committee of the Party show that during the period under review the Party succeeded in prompoting to leading State and Party posts over five hundred thousand young Bolsheviks, members of the Party and people standing close to the Party, over twenty per cent of whom were women.

What is our task now ?

Our task now is to concentrate the work of selecting cadres, from top to bottom, in the hands of one body and to raise it to a proper, scientific, Bolshevik level.

ON PRACTICAL WORK

(*Extracts from "Seven Questions Answered"*)

How the Party's political work is to be strengthened

It is to be supposed that all have now understood, have realized, that to become excessively engrossed in economic campaigns and economic successes while underestimating and forgetting Party-politial questions leads up a blind alley. Consequently it is necessary to turn the attention of our workers towards Party-political questions, so that economic success will be combined with and accompany successes in Party-political work.

How in practice is the task of strengthening Party-political work, the task of freeing Party organizations from economic details, to be carried out ? As can be seen from the discussion, some comrades are prone to draw from this the incorrect conclusion that we should now get away altogether from economic work. At any rate, there were voices sounding the note : Well, now, thank God, we shall be rid of economic matters ; now we can busy ourselves with Party-political work. Is this conclusion correct ? No, it is not. When our Party comrades, carried away with economic successes, moved away from politics, this was an extreme which cost us big sacrifices. If some of our comrades, taking up the task of strengthening Party-pilitical work, now think of moving away from economy, this will be the other extreme, which will cost us no less sacrifices. You must not jump from one extreme to another. You must not separate politics from economics. We cannot move away from economy, just as we cannot move away from politics. For the convenience of study, people usually separate the methodological questions of economics from the questions of politics. But this is done merely from the standpoint of method, artificially, only for the convenience of study. But in life, on the contrary, politics and economics are in practice inseparable. They exist together and act together. And he who thinks to separate in our practical policy economy from politics, to strengthen economic work at the cost of belittling political work, or contrarywise, to strengthen political work at the cost of belittling economic work, will find himself in a blind alley....

How workers should be selected

What does it mean—to select workers correctly and correctly to distribute them to work?

This means to select workers, in the first place, according to a political criterion, *i.e.*, are they worthy of political trusts, and in the second place, according to a practical criterion, *i.e.*, are they suitable for such-and-such concrete work.

This means not to convert a business-like approach into a "business-man's" approach, when people are interested in the practical qualities of workers, but are not interested in their political physiognomy.

This means not to convert a political approach into the single and all-embracing approach, when people become interested in the political physiognomy of workers, but are not interested in their practical qualities.

Can it be said that this Bolshevik rule is carried out by our Party comrades? Unfortunately, this cannot be said. It has already been spoken of here at the Plenum. But not everything was said. The fact is that well-tried rule is violated right and left in our practice, and moreover in the grossest way. Most frequently, workers are selected not according to objective criteria, but according to fortuitous, subjective, narrow and parochial criteria. Most frequently, so-called acquaintances are chosen, personal friends, fellow-townsmen, people who have shown personal devotion, masters of euology to their patrons, irrespective of whether they are suitable from a political and a business-like standpoint.

Naturally, instead of a leading group of responsible workers, a family group, a company, is formed, the members of which try to live peacefully, not to offened each other, not to wash their dirty linen in public, to eulogize each other, and from time to time to send inane and nauseating reports to the centre about their successes.

It is not difficult to understand that in such conditions of kinship there can be no place either for criticism of the shortcomings of the work or for self-criticism by the leaders of the work....

How the work of comrades is checked

What does it mean—to check-up on workers, to check-up on the fulfilment of tasks ?

To check-up on workers means to test them, not on their promises and declarations but on the results of their work.

To test the fulfilment of tasks means to test them, not only in the office and not only according to formal reports, but first and foremost at the place of work according to the actual results of fulfilment.

Do we need such a check-up in general ? Undoubtedly we do. We need it, in the second place, because only such a check-up make it possible to know a worker, to determine his real qualities. We need it, in the second place, because only such a check-up will make it possible to determine the good qualities and shortcomings of the executive apparatus. We need it, in the third place, because only such a check-up will make it possible to determine the good qualities and shortcoming of the tasks themselves.

Some comrades think that people can only be tested from above, when the leaders examine subordinates on the results of their work. This is not true. Verifying from above is necessary, of course, as one of the effective measures for testing people and the fulfilment of tasks.

But testing from above far from exhausts the whole business of checking-up. There is still another kind of check-up, the check-up from below, where the masses, the subordinates, examine the leaders, point out their mistakes, and show them ways of correcting them. This kind of verification is one of the most effective methods of testing people.

The rank-and-file Party members verify their leaders at meetings of active Party workers, and conferences and congresses, by listening to their reports, by criticising their defects, and finally by electing or not electing some or other leading comrades to the leading Party organs. Precise operation of democratic centralism in the Party as demanded in our Party statutes, unconditional submission of Party organs to election, the right of putting forward and withdrawing candidates, secret ballot, freedom of criticism and self-criticism, all these and similar measures must be carried into life, in order incidentally to facilitate the check-up on and control over the leaders of the Party by the rank and file Party members.

The non-Party masses verify their economic, trade union and other leaders at meetings of non-Party active workers, at all kinds of mass conferences, where they hear reports of their leaders, criticize defects, and indicate ways of correcting them....

Training cadres on the basis of their own mistakes

What does it mean—to train cadres on the basis of their own mistakes? Lenin taught that one of the surest means of correctly training and educating Party cadres, of correctly training and educating the working-class and the masses of the working people, is conscientiously to disclose the mistakes of the Party, to study the causes that have given rise to these mistakes, and to indicate the paths necessary for overcoming these mistakes. Lenin said :

> "The attitude of a political party to its mistakes is one of the most important and surest criteria of the seriousness of the Party and of its fulfilment in practice of its obligations to its class and the masses of working people. Openly to admit error, to reveal its causes, to analyse the situation that gave rise to it, attentively to discuss the means of correcting the error—this is the sign of a serious Party, this is the fulfilment by it of its obligations, this is training and educating the class, and then the masses."

This means that the Bolsheviks are duty bound not to gloss over their mistakes, not to dodge the question of their mistakes, as often happens with us, but honestly and openly to admit their mistakes, honestly and openly to indicate the way of correcting these mistakes, honestly and openly to correct their mistakes.

I would not say that many of our comrades undertake this business with satisfaction. But if the Bolsheviks really wish to be Bolsheviks they must find sufficient manliness in themselves openly to admit their mistakes, to reveal their causes, to indicate the ways of correcting them and thereby to give the party cadres correct training and correct political education. For it is only on this path, only in circumstances of open and honest self-criticism that Bolshevik cadres can really be educated, that real Bolshevik leaders can be educated....

Some comrades say that it is not advisable to speak openly of one's mistakes since the open admission of one's mistakes may be construed by our enemies as our weakness and may be utilized by them.

This is rubbish, comrades. Downright rubbish. The open recognition of our mistakes and their honest rectification can on the contrary only strengthen our Party, raise its authority in the eyes of the workers, peasants and working intellectuals, and increase the strength and power of our State. And this is the main thing. As long as we have the workers, peasants and working intellectuals with us all the rest will settle itself.

Other comrades say that open admission of our mistakes can lead not to training and consolidating our cardes, but to weakening and disconcerting them, that we must spare and take care of our cadres, that we must spare their self-esteem and tranquillity. To this end they propose to slur over the mistakes of our comrades, to weaken the vigour of the criticism, and still better to disregard these mistakes. Such a line is not only fundamentally incorrect but also dangerous in the highest degree, dangerous first and foremost for the cadres whom they want to "spare" and "take care of." To spare and preserve cadres by slurring over their mistakes means of a certainty to ruin these very cadres.

Teaching the masses—and learning from them

Lenin taught us not only to teach the masses, but also to learn from them.

What does this mean?

It means, firstly, that we leaders must not become conceited, and we must understand that if we are members of the Central Committee or are People's Commissars this does not mean that we possess all the knowledge necessary for giving correct leadership. An official position by itself does not provide knowledge and experience.

This means, secondly, that our experience alone, the experience of leaders, is insufficient to give correct leadership, that consequently it is necessary that one's experience, the experience of leaders, be supplemented by the experience of the masses, by the experience of the rank-and-file Party members, by the experience of the working class, by the experience of the people.

This means, thirdly, that we must not for one moment weaken, still less break our connections, with the masses. This means, fourthly, that we must pay careful attention to the voice of the masses, to the voice of the rank-and-file members of the Party, to the voice of the so-called "small men," to the voice of the people.

What does it mean—to lead correctly ?

This does not at all mean sitting in one's office and compiling instructions.

Correctly to lead means :

Firstly, to find a correct solution of the question. But a correct solution cannot be found unless account is taken of the experience of the masses who test the results of our leadership on their own backs.

Secondly, to organize the operation of the correct solution, which, however, cannot be done without direct aid from the masses.

Thirdly, to organize a check on the fulfilment of this decision which again cannot be done without the direct aid of the masses.

We leaders see things, events and people, from only one side, I would say from above ; our field of vision consequently is more or less limited. The masses, on the contrary, see things, events and people from another side, I would say from below ; their field of vision consequently is also in a certain degree limited. To receive a correct solution to the question, these two experience must be united. Only in such a case will the leadership be correct.

This is what it means—not only to teach the masses, but also to learn from them. . . .

Thus it transpires that our experience alone, the experience of the leaders, is still far from adequate for the guidance of our affairs. In order to guide correctly, the experience of the leaders must be supplemented by the experience of the Party masses, by the experience of the working class, by the experience of the toilers, by the experience of the so-called "small people."

And when is this possible?

It is possible only if the leaders are closely connected with the masses, if they are bound up with the Party masses, with the working class, with the peasantry, with the working intellectuals.

Contacts with the masses, the strengthening of these contacts, readiness to listen to the voice of the masses. In this lies the strength and impregnability of Bolshevik leadership. It may be taken, as a rule, that so long as Bolsheviks keep contact with the broad masses of the people, they will be invincible. And contrarywise, it is sufficient for Bolsheviks to break away from the masses, and lose contact with them, it is sufficient for them to become covered with bureaucratic rust, for them to lose all their strength and to be converted into nothingness.

In the system of mythology of the ancient Greeks, there was one famous hero, Antæus, who as mythology declares, was the son of Poseidon, the god of the sea, and Gaea, the goddess of the earth. He was particularly attached to his mother, who had borne, fed and brought him up. There was no hero whom this Antæus did not vanquish. He was considered to be an invincible hero. Wherein lay his strength? It lay in the fact that every time he was hard pushed in a struggle with an opponent, he touched the earth, his mother, who had borne him and fed him, and obtained new strength. But, nevertheless, he had a weak spot—the danger of being separated in some way from the earth. His enemies took account of this weakness of his and lay in wait for him. And an enemy was found who took advantage of this weakness and vanquished him. This was Hercules. But how did Hercules defeat him? He tore him from the earth, raised him into the air, deprived him of the possibility of touching the earth, and throttled him.

I think that Bolsheviks remind us of Antæus, the hero of Greek mythology. Like Antæus, they are strong in keeping contact with their mother, with the masses, who bore them, fed them and educated them. And as long as they keep contact with their mother, with the people, they have every chance of remaining invincible.

This is the key to the invincibility of Bolshevik leadership.

NOTES

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Our Program" (V. I. Lenin, *Marx-Engels-Marxism*, Moscow 1947, pp. 112-13). p. *48*

[2] F. Engels, *Anti-Dūhring*, Moscow 1947, p. 417. p. *48*

[3] V. I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, Moscow 1949, p. 51. p. *51*

[1] The text of Sringaryov's telegram was reproduced by V. I. Lenin in his article, "A 'Voluntary Agreement' Between Landlords and Peasants?" in *Pravda*, No. 33, April 15, 1917 (see V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 24, p. 108). p. *70*

[2] J. V. Stalin is here quoting Karl Marx's letter to Frederick Engels of April 16, 1856 as given in the book : Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Letters*, Moscow 1922 (see Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1951, p. 412). p. *73*

[3] This refers to J. V. Stalin's speech "Concerning the Question of the Proletariat and the Peasantry," delivered on January 27, 1925, at the Thirteenth Gubernia Conference of the Moscow organisation of the R.C.P.(B.), during the discussion of work in the countryside (see J. V. Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 25-33). p. *77*

[4] See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1951, p. 412. p. *84*

[5] The reference is to the counter-revolutionary revolt of the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries in Moscow, July 6-7, 1918, which was put down within a few hours. p. *87*

[6] See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 31, pp. 129-41. p. *90*

[7] See J. V. Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 332-41. p. *91*

[8] *Novaya Zhizn* (*New Life*)—a Menshevik newspaper published in Petrograd from April 1917 to July 1918. p. *96*

[9] The Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) was held in Moscow, December 18-31, 1925. J. V. Stalin delivered the political report of the Central Committee. The congress put as the central task of the Party the struggle for the socialist industrialisation of the country, as being the basis for building socialism in the U.S.S.R. In its resolutions, the congress stressed the importance of further strengthening the alliance between the working class and the middle peasants, while relying on the poor peasants in the struggle against the kulaks. The congress pointed to the necessity of supporting and furthering the development of agriculture by means of more efficient farming methods and drawing an ever greater number of the peasant farms, through the co-operatives, into the channel of socialist construction. (For the resolutions and decisions of the congress, see *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part II, 1953, pp. 73-137. For the Fourteenth Congress, see *History of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Short Course*, Moscow 1954, pp. 428-33.) p. *110*

[10] This refers to V. I. Lenin's report on "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and Prospects of the World Revolution" at the Fourth Congress

of the Comintern, held from November 5 to December 5, 1922 (see V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, pp. 380-94). p. *111*

[11] This refers to V. I. Lenin's report on "The Tactics of the R.C.P." at the Third Congress of the Comintern, held from June 22 to July 12, 1921 (see V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, pp. 454-72). p.*112*

[12] V. I. Lenin, "Valuable Admissions of Pitirim Sorokin" (see *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 28, p. 171). p. *114*

[13] See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums,* Part I, 1953, p. 425. p. *116*

[14] See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 29, p. 183. p. *118*

[15] See V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 29, p. 139. p. *122*

[16] See V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 29, pp. 193, 194, 196. p. *122*

[17] The Sixteenth Moscow Gubernia Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) was held on November 20-28, 1927. At the morning sitting on November 23, J. V. Stalin spoke on "The Party and the Opposition" (see *Works,* Vol. 10, pp. 257-74). p. *123*

[18] These words from Dante's *Divine Comedy* were quoted by Marx as a motto in the preface to the first German edition of *Capital* (see K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. I, Moscow 1951, p. 410). p. *125*

[19] See *Decisions and Resolutions of Congresses of Soviets of the R.S.F.S.R.,* Moscow 1939, p. 225. p. *132*

[20] See V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, p. 293. p. *133*

[21] *Bednota* (*The Poor*)—a daily newspaper, organ of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.), published in Moscow from March 1918 to January 1931. p. *133*

[22] See V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, p. 212. p. *139*

[23] *Krasnaya Gazeta* (*Red Newspaper*)—a daily newspaper published by the Leningrad Soviet of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Men's Deputies from January 1918 to February 1939. p. *143*

[24] This refers to the local economic conferences. They were in existence in 1921-23 under the Executive Committees of the Soviets. p. *146*

[25] The All-Union Conference of Marxist Students of Agrarian Questions, convened by the Communist Academy of the C.E.C., U.S.S.R., was held December 20-27, 1929. The 302 delegates who attended it represented scientific research institutions, agricultural and economic colleges, and newspapers and magazines. J. V. Stalin delivered a speech " Concerning Questions of Agrarian Policy in the U.S.S.R." at the concluding plenary meeting on December 27. p. *149*

[26] See *Lenin Miscellany* XI, p. 368. p. *154*

[27] See V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 31, pp. 7-8. p. *154*

[28] See V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 31, p. 483. p. *154*

[29] F. Engels, *The Peasant Question in France and Germany,* 1922, p. 66 (see K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. II, 1955, p. 435). p. *157*

[30] See J. V. Stalin, *Works,* Vol. 11, pp. 85-101. p. *160*

[31] See V. I. Lenin, *Works,* 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 33, pp. 211-15 p. *167*

[22] *Krasnaya Zvezda* (*Red Star*)—a military and political daily news-

paper founded in January 1924. In March 1953 it became the central organ of the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Defence. p. *172*

[33] See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums,* Part II, 1953, pp. 73-82. p. *173*

[34] For the Sixteenth Party Conference resolution on "Ways and Means of Promoting Agriculture and Tax Relief for the Middle Peasant," see *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums,* Part II, 1953 pp. 455-69. p. *173*

[35] See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums,* Part II, 1953, pp. 350-68. p. *173*

[36] For the Fifteenth Party Congress resolution on "Directives for the Compilation of a Five-Year Economic Plan," see *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums,* Part II, 1953, pp. 330-49. p. *173*

[37] See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums,* Part II, 1953, pp. 313-21. p. 173

[38] This resolution of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) was published in *Pravda,* No. 73, March 15, 1930. (See also *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums,* Part II, 1953, pp. 548-51.) p. *184*

[39] For the resolution of the C.C., C.P.S.U.(B.) of January 5, 1930, on "The Rate of Collectivisation and State Measures to Assist Collective-Farm Development" see also *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums,* Part II, 1953, pp. 544-47 p. *188*

[40] The First All-Union Congress of Collective-Farm Shock Brigaders took place in Moscow on February 15-19, 1933, attended by 1,513 delegates. J. V. Stalin took part in the work of the congress, which elected him to its honorary presidium and addressed greetings to him in the name of the millions of collective-farm peasants. The congress discussed the question of strengthening the collective farms and the tasks of the spring sowing. On February 19, when the closing session was held, the congress was addressed by J. V. Stalin. Other speakers at the congress were V. M. Molotov, L. M. Kaganovich, M. I. Kalinin, K. Y. Voroshilov and S. M. Budyonny. In its appeal to all peasant collective farmers of the U.S.S.R. the congress called for the collective farms to be made Bolshevik and for the development of all-Union socialist emulation of the state and collective farms for a bumper harvest and exemplary preparation and carrying out of the spring sowing. p. *204*

[41] This refers to a letter sent by the collective farmers of the area served by the Bezenchuk Machine and Tractor Station of the Middle-Volga territory (now Kuibyshev Region) to J. V. Stalin, published in *Pravda,* No. 28, January 29, 1933. p. *218*

[42] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Works,* Ger. ed., Berlin, 1958, Vol. 3, p. 212. p. *257*

[43] *Ibid.,* pp. 411-12. p. *257*

[44] *Ibid.,* 1957, Vol. 2, p. 351. p. *258*

[45] Paul Lafargue (1842-1911), well-known activist of French and in-

ternational workers' movements, and outstanding Marxist propagandist and publicist. He was one of the founders of the French Workers' Party, student and comrade-in-arms of Marx and Engels, and husband of Marx's daughter Laura. p. *258*

[46] Bund, General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia, was a Jewish petty-bourgeois opportunist organization founded at a congress held in Vilna in October, 1897, which worked mainly among Jewish handicraftsmen. At the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party's First Congress in 1898, Bund joined the R.S.D.L.P. as "an independent autonomous organization concerned only with the special problems of the Jewish proletariat." Once it joined the Party, however, it propagated nationalism and separatism in the Russian working-class movement. The Bundist bourgeois-nationalist standpoint was sternly repudiated by *Iskra,* newspaper founded by Lenin. p. *261*

[47] V. I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination," *Selected Works in Two Volumes,* Eng. ed., Moscow, 1952, Vol. I, Part 2, pp. 318-19. p. *262*

[48] J. V. Stalin, "The National Question and Leninism," *Works,* Eng. ed., Moscow, 1954, Vol. II, p. 353. p. *262*

[49] Arakcheyev regime, named after the reactionary politician Count Arakcheyev, was an unrestrained dictatorial police state, warlord despotism and brutal rule enforced in Russia in the first quarter of the 19th century. Stalin uses the term here to indicate Marr's overriding domination in Soviet linguistic circles. p. *270*

[50] Four-element analysis — Marr asserted that pronunciation of mankind's primitive language was evolved from the four syllables *sal, ber, yon* and *rosb.* p. *271*

[51] "Proto-language" theory—the doctrine of the Indo-European school which holds that a linguistic family consists of a group of *patois* (dialects), split from a common primitive "parent language." For example, modern Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian are sister languages derived from Latin, and were originally only different *patois.* However, as there is no documentary evidence for the existence of a "parent language" of most of the dialects or languages, the Indo-European scholars have worked out a hypothetical "parent language," their main aim being to facilitate explanation of the rules of phonetic changes, but there is no way to prove the extent of the truth. p. *271*

[52] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Works,* Ger. ed., Berlin, 1958, Vol. 3, pp. 432 and 430. p. *275*

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